

# THE RAMBLER.

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VOL. V. *New Series.*

FEBRUARY 1856.

PART XXVI.

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## THE WAR, AND ITS INFLUENCE ON CATHOLICISM.

WE English Catholics are always ready to own, some of us even to brag of, our great political disunion. It is notorious, and has often been insisted upon in these pages, that with the exception of the dogmas of religion, there is not a view or a shade in politics, philosophy, or literature, which has not its Catholic supporters. It is notorious that it is impossible to get up any wide-spread and efficient union or organisation among us for any purpose, even for an object so nearly touching our religious interests as the education of our children in poor-schools, middle-schools, and colleges.

Now, without pretending to defend this exaggeration of slipshod indifference, we cannot help thinking that our position as subjects of an heretical government, in the midst of an heretical nation, quite explains the tendency in question. In good sooth, we are in difficulties which might puzzle the genius of the most gifted Catholic politician to settle. In England, as in most Protestant countries, there are two great parties, the conservative and the liberal; the former generally consisting of persons who profess the largest amount of respect for Christianity, and embodying in its ranks most of the religious sentiment of the country; but at the same time professing a hard heartless system, a cold cynical Calvinism, confident of being "owned" by God, and readily acquiescing in the temporal and eternal reprobation of every other shade of opinion. The world, they think, belongs to the saints, that is, to themselves; and their one work is to wage war on the Beast, that is, on us.

The liberals, on the other hand, are the stuff out of whom red republicans may one day be made; they own themselves more or less Broad Church, Indifferentists, Pantheists, or Atheists in religion, materialists and positivists in philo-

sophy, Mazzinians, Kossuthites, mobocrats in politics. Yet this party offers us fewer insults, more present protection, than the other. We are freer to act in the presence of this great Gallio, who cares for none of these things, than in the presence of evangelical fanaticism. We find by present experience that, politically speaking, the party that professes religious indifference is less to be deprecated than that of the Exeter-Hall saints. Yet if we give our outward support to the liberal party, there at once arises the scandal of a colorable imputation of an intimate alliance between Popery and infidelity. The religious feeling of the nation is justly shocked; it is more convinced than ever that our religion is a mere political organisation, and is confirmed in its estimation of Popery as something more diabolical than Mormonism, Mahometanism, Judaism, or infidelity itself. Besides this, the support which we give to the liberal party, though it may secure our present quiet, is yet full of threatening for the future. It strengthens the hands of the anarchists, of the enemies of all order, of men whose ultimate aim is not against the existence of Popery, but against the family, against marriage, against the fundamental principles of society, against every vestige of Christianity. The day may be distant; but when the crash comes, the ferocity which we should experience at the hands of this wretched party would be many times more unendurable than the cold-blooded, sneaking, insulting, and yet sincere hostility of the Evangelical and the Calvinist. Which of the two, then, are we to support? are we to go on the principle that the evil of each day is sufficient, and take no thought for the future? or are we also to give some weight to past history, to take warning by what has already happened, and to forecast what is to come? There is plenty to be said on both sides; and it is no wonder that the Catholic politician finds himself inclining now to one side, now to another, with a vacillating inconsistency that surprises and scandalises the statesman whose party is his principle, and whose country is his conscience.

The Catholic mode of considering the present war has furnished no exception to our usual mode of treating political questions. The uncertainty we feel about it is reflected in our newspapers, not one of which ever advocated it with the trenchant decision of a partisan, while others have from the first written about it more from a Russian than from a British point of view. And yet, one would think, if on any question of English politics a favourable decision were easy, it would be on this. In alliance as she is with the great Catholic power of the West, England cannot hope to turn all the in-

fluence, all the advantages she may gain, to the use of her dominant religion. Protestant state as she is, and, contrary to her maxim of religious equality, using her political influence for the benefit of the creed of the dominant party, she surely cannot expect, in a war wherein a great Catholic power is an equal partner with her, to be able to turn successes to a purpose that would at once compromise her with that power. Surely, we might think, if ever there was a matter in which the success of a Protestant state would be of no benefit to Protestantism as such, it is the present war. If ever it were lawful to wish for the aggrandisement of such a state, it is in the present instance.

Again, what effects have not been predicted from the familiar intercourse of our army and navy with the Catholic soldiers and sailors of our allies? from the spectacle of the self-sacrifice of priests and sisters of charity daily displayed to our troops? Whatever our home population may think, surely our men, who see these examples before their eyes, will bring home with them a very different impression of the Catholic religion from that which they received from their parents, their schoolmasters, and their parsons.

Again, a time of war is a time of change. Abuses, injustices, inequalities, like rust in machinery, increase the friction of the wheels of the state, and tend to bring it to a dead lock. In time of war such a result would be ruin; the bolts, therefore, of the temple of prejudice, like those of Janus, must be drawn back. The shock of war must be allowed to shake down the crazy erections of a period of spoliation, impiety, proscription, inconsistency, and barbarism; and then from the top of their ruins the new generation may perhaps be able to discover things that were hidden from the passions which governed the age just past. War must bring its political changes; and those whose position will most probably be improved by such changes are those who have least to lose. Such times of change permit all good as well as all evil; in destroying the past, they also pull up by the roots the hatreds of the past. Error has once more to descend from its fortresses and its citadels, and to bivouac on the same battlefield with the truth, whose existence it had so often boasted of having destroyed from the face of the earth. Surely now is a time in which men have more chance of recognising the truth, in proportion as they have more need of it, and as it is brought more clearly before them, even though it be in a hostile way.

Then again, the foe against whom we fight is even a more redoubtable enemy of Catholicity than England herself. The



Russian nation has more unity, more faith, more wish to see its own religion triumphant than the English. In its persecutions in Poland, it has shown itself more remorseless and barbarous, if less hypocritical and underhand, than even England in its conduct to Ireland. Russia and England may perhaps both dream of an ecclesiastical supremacy over the world; but the aim of England is destructive and negative,—that of Russia positive and affirmative. England would simply forbid us to be Catholics; Russia positively sets up the golden calf before which she would make the nations bow. England would only oblige us to conceal our religion; Russia would force us to commit acts of false worship. The establishment of Russian power, though it may be in itself more religious than that of England, would probably be a severer blow to the Church, would entail upon us a keener persecution, than the increase of the influence of England. To see two such powers expending their strength in knocking one another down, must, to the Catholic who can divest himself of all national feelings, and view the combat simply in the light of Catholic interests, furnish an amusement nearly as agreeable as that of seeing

“ ——— the engineer  
Hoist with his own petard.”

Certainly, from this point of view, the hostilities and jealousies between England, Russia, Prussia, and America, may to the Catholic politician present as hopeful anticipations as our alliance and increased intercourse with a great Catholic power.

Once more, nothing more than the events of this war can teach Russia the necessary lesson, that it is an evil and bitter thing to stand alone in the world; to have a snug Christianity all to itself, cut off from the Catholic Church; to have no common interests, no common aims with Christians of other countries; to meet them, perhaps, in the holy places of Jerusalem and Bethlehem, but to meet them as enemies; to knock them down and strip them, and to extort a confession of her superior force. This war, if any thing, must teach her that the broad expanse of her territory is not universality; that the numerous names of petty tribes who adhere to her form of Christianity, however long they may make her list, do not make Catholicity. Now, if ever, she must feel that the blessing of the Pope, the communion of her bishops with those of Austria and France, the sympathy of her population with the peasants of Southern Europe in faith and in hope and in enthusiasm for the same religion, would do more to ensure the march of her influence, and to neutralise the force of mere political considerations about the balance of power, than all



her armies, all her diplomacy. Only imagine what Russia might have been at this moment if she had uniformly lowered like a thundercloud over the revolutionary tendencies of Europe as the protector of the Church, the preserver of the patrimony of the poor from pillage, the enemy of the imperial and royal interferers with theology, the patron and hope of Catholics, instead of their bugbear and their dread.

On the other hand, the sight of what Russian fanaticism can do is perhaps more than any other thing calculated to teach us what we have lost under the influence of the philosophers and the march of intellect. Nothing can replace enthusiasm; economists and calculators are not the stuff out of which heroes can be formed. And no local temporary enthusiasm, no nationality of feeling, can in the long-run replace the universal enthusiasm of attachment to a universal religion. The true barrier against the fanaticism of error is enthusiasm for the truth. The only way of neutralising the influence of Russia is to surround her with a cordon of earnest Catholicity. What consummate wisdom our statesmen must now own they have shown in opposing themselves to all negotiations for the union of the great body of Armenians to the Church! What a strength has England gained from her years of underhand interference with the French protection of Eastern Catholicity; by her insulting hostility to creeds nearer to the truth than her own; by her bigoted opposition to the consolidation of any Catholic influence in the East! If we really fear the gradual approach of the Russian power to our Eastern possessions, why are we fools enough to oppose the establishment of what in the long-run is the single antagonist which must be quelled before Russia can be dominant? If the work of St. Francis Xavier had been continued in India, India might by this time have been the natural antagonist of Russia, instead of a mere passive territory, a herd of cattle, as ready to be milked by the hand of the Czar as by that of the Hon. East India Company. What wisdom it would have been if England had lent her influence towards joining together Georgians, Armenians, Syrians, and Maronites, in a league of Catholic unity; had helped to allay, instead of excite, the animosity of the Christian subjects of the Porte against the Christians of the South of Europe; in a word, had helped to consolidate not a political but a religious league against the progress of the cold Cæsarism of the schism of the north! But sapient Protestantism will never understand this. The last great act in this direction, instead of having its political significance thankfully recognised, has only caused the devil which possesses her to writhe in the most ludicrous contortions, and

to howl with the most ferocious fanaticism. Certainly the tendency and intention of the Austrian Concordat is to give at least ecclesiastical unity to a congeries of discordant nationalities ; to give them one common possession for which they may feel a common enthusiasm ; to inspire them with a faith that will always be the fiercest and most indomitable opponent of Russian aggression, as long as Russia remains what she is. Protestantism and schism have no convictions, no enthusiasm. The Lutherans of Finland and Courland, the degenerate Christians of Armenia and Georgia, Greeks and Cossacks, soon bring their necks to bear with slavish indifference the yoke of a religion that differs more or less from their own ; only Catholic Poland requires to be harried with fire and sword, to have her priests and her nobles banished or shot, before she can be brought to a graceless and precarious submission to her fanatical tyrant. Liberalism devised a pretty work when it consented to the partition of Poland. It is strong enough in blaming those who were its instruments in this injustice ; but when precisely the same question comes up in another form,—when it is again proposed to strengthen the hands of the Catholic Church by the Austrian Concordat, and in a more indirect way by the Austrian tenure of the Danubian principalities,—liberalism and Protestantism must protest. And yet this Concordat, if it is efficiently carried out, and if the hopes and the prayers of its authors succeed, will be found to be a truer check upon the progress of Russia, a more efficient barrier against her aggression, than the fall of Sebastopol itself. It is already a forbidden subject in Russia : the journals are as silent about it as about a defeat of their armies. But Protestant bigotry will in the end be found as much its own enemy as it is that of Catholicity. At any rate, whatever the bigots may say, the present war may teach reflective thoughtful men a novel lesson on the necessity of the Church for the preservation of European society.

There is another consideration, the drift of which is in the same direction, namely, to lead Catholics to look with hopefulness on the results which will be occasioned directly or indirectly by the present war. Is it not true that the state of the world most favourable for the spread of Catholicity is a state of political unity ? When our Lord came upon the earth, the Roman Empire was such a unity ; and while it continued in this state, in spite of the fiercest persecutions and hostility of the political order, the Catholic Church marched on in one uniform unvarying progress of success. When the Roman Empire split into two, the foundation was laid for the Eastern schism from the West. While the West remained



in one grand political confederation, while it was with truth reckoned to be one Christendom, the Catholic Church flourished. It established its power over the nations of the confederation, and made vast outlying conquests. When this Christian confederation ceased, when jealousy sprung up between Christian powers, when they denied their subjection in spirituals to the paramount authority of the Church, national enthusiasm took the place of Catholic enthusiasm, the separate powers began to support their own anti-popes, Gallican liberties began to be claimed, soon national religions were substituted for the Catholic Church, and the schism of the West was consummated. The political theory of the balance of power brought no mitigation of this evil; for it was no honest bond, but simply an agreement of thieves to unite against the thief who practised his profession upon one of his own confederates. It was the union of hatred, jealousy, and fear, not of Christian love and Catholic peace. It was the apotheosis of national jealousies and antipathies, not that of the true spirit of humanity. Nationality has always been the great political enemy of the Catholic Church; whatever loss she has ever suffered has been from her own children, because her own children chose to be Englishmen, Frenchmen, Spaniards, Austrians, Germans, before they were Catholics. But for the last half-century another spirit has been abroad; the march of Providence has been again towards ecclesiastical and political union. Gallicanism has ceased to exist. The Russian empire and its policy is a great confession of the desire of unity. The conquests of the great Napoleon had this object in view; the socialist doctrine of the sodality of peoples is but another mode of expressing the same idea. In the other hemisphere, the progress of the United States is towards the same consummation. And no doubt the present war encourages this tendency. If it separates, it also unites; and where it unites, it must, in a measure, heal national antipathies, demolish national pride, and thus fill up the valleys and level the mountains which at present render the way of Catholicity so rugged and difficult. Whatever may be the result of the present war, some good must come of it in this respect. If the gigantic Russian Empire were by any chance to come off victorious, Catholicity would at least have as good a chance under it as under the dominion of the Cæsars; and she would have the advantage of having a territory prepared for her conquests, reaching not from Persia to Spain, which was the greatest extent of the Roman monarchy, but an empire that overshadows China and Holland, and extends its ramifications into the New World itself. On the other hand, the



success of the Allies would be the seal of a confederation of Southern Europe, for purposes not merely selfish and suspicious, not merely for jealously watching an encroaching power, but for mutual aid, for friendship, and for commerce—a true sodality and solidarity of peoples, which surely might be found as favourable to the progress of Catholicity as ever the extension of the Roman Empire was. And in this point of view the admission of an infidel nation like Turkey to the European confederation may be defended. For the principle is, that the Christian polity can be assisted by the civil, not by grafting the sword on the pastoral staff, not by destroying the enemies of the Church at the point of the bayonet, but by letting a peace-making power, though it be indifferent or heathen, like that of Augustus Cæsar, walk through the earth, and take care that “all the earth is inhabited and is at rest.” Such a confederation as we regard possible is not one that can take for its motto,

“Auferte gentem perfidam  
Credientium de finibus,”

with a sword in one hand and a Bible in the other; but such an association of people of different faiths as shall in the end compel each to guarantee an absolute freedom of conscience to every member of the confederate states; an association which shall leave the Catholic Church as free as she supposed herself to be in the United States of America before the disgraceful outbreak of the Know-Nothing party. A Protestant confederation is out of the question; a Catholic one would exclude England. The alliance from which the English Catholic can hope for most good is just such a one as the present, the effect of which must in the long-run be the separation of religion from politics, and the freedom of religion in its own sphere. For let us always remember, a fair stage and no favour is all that we demand, as it is apparently the one thing which hypocritical Protestantism, with all its pretence about the inviolability of private judgment, is determined to prevent our obtaining.

But it cannot be denied that there is another side of the picture. There is not an argument that we have urged which may not be reversed and turned upon us. How can we hope that any circumstances will prevent Englishmen from using whatever influence they may gain to the “furtherance of wickedness and vice, and the suppression of true religion and virtue”? It is all very well for diplomatists to state on paper that their views are simply political, that all they seek are material guarantees against the advance of a power, or commercial facilities; but the persons to carry out these purposes,

the force of public opinion which backs them up, and pushes them on, and provides their means, are powers which, whatever oversights they commit in the region of politics, generally have their eyes wide open to, and show consummate address in availing themselves of, all opportunities of furthering their peculiar religious views. Whatever freedom of conscience an English Government may proclaim, however it may engage to restrict itself to the merely political order, let us always understand that, even with the most honest intentions on the part of the members of the Government, it could not carry out its professions. It reposes too immediately on the seething foundation of popular opinion not to express but too faithfully the heavings of the abyss beneath it. And in England the mass of the people either hate Popery because they hate all religion, and because Popery is the great representative of its class, the generic exemplar and type of religion, containing in itself all reality that subordinate species divide between them, and therefore concentrates in itself all hatreds due to them, attracts to its doctrines and its discipline all the savage fury which is poured out only in portions upon the religious sects; or else they hate Popery because they profess a system which is only true on condition of Popery being not merely false, but also fraudulent and diabolical,—not simply a mistake, an error, but a conspiracy, a treason, and a crime.

On the other hand, the so-called Evangelicalism of England is a system which can never be loyal to plighted faith, because it recognises no means of plighting it. In religious questions it cannot be bound, for no one has any limiting power over another; the minority are not bound by the majority, a single dissentient voice is as strong as the all but unanimous decision of the rest. The whole system rests on the most extravagant abuse of private judgment, not merely with regard to a man's own convictions, but with regard to his right of imposing these convictions upon others. Hence all the religious fraud, all the underhand influences which the English Government exercises and permits, are justly laid to the account, not of the Government itself, but of the popular feeling, and the private convictions of the individuals who exert it. The Government, as a Government, proclaims its fairness, its perfect equality to all creeds and all shades of opinion; while the governing individuals are not slow to proclaim publicly their bigotry, and their hatred and loathing for the Catholic religion. There can be no question that the English is a Protestant Government in the strictest sense; that its principle of action is to perpetuate the ascendancy of

Protestantism, and to prevent the growth of Catholicity; that its profession of impartiality and fairness is but a contemptible quibble, to allow it the opportunity of disclaiming in its own name all acts of religious intolerance, and of throwing the blame of them upon the broad back of the multitudinous-headed people, who are numerous enough

“To share a sin; for such proportions fall,  
That, like a stink, 'tis nothing to them all.”\*

Whatever injustice is committed to Catholics; if a jury whitewashes an Achilli, or refuses to find a perjurer guilty because the injured party is a Catholic; if a mob burns a Catholic church; if a Dr. Armstrong or a Mr. Wallis makes the most ludicrously false charges against the Catholic priesthood,—all this we must put up with; if our poor children are kidnapped, the Government is very sorry, but cannot prevent the expression of popular opinion, which, after all, finds an echo in the heart of every one of our governors, who would not prevent its expression if they could. But if, on the other hand, any case of hardship to a Protestant occurs in a Catholic country, where the wisdom of the serpent has not yet introduced this distinction between the things done and the things permitted by the Government, our rulers immediately direct their diplomatic agents to make inquiries, and offer their advice or their protestations with the coolest assumption. No wonder that the Englishman is enamoured of the principle of indistinctness and absence of precision in religious formulas. In England whatever religious injustice is committed is the work of the whole people, and cannot be brought home to any one body, any one principle, any definite head; while abroad, where religious rights are codified, where ecclesiastical law is as well defined as civil, all abuses can be at once fixed upon the right person or the right power, complaints may be made, and apologies can be demanded. If not honest, it cannot be denied that the English principle is at least convenient. But in spite of its convenience, it must always inspire the considerate Catholic with the deepest distrust, must make him see that no professions of the English Government in matters of religion can be trusted, that no political interests can be expected to put rein or bridle on an undefined, diffused, and cloudy responsibility, the moving powers of which are parsons and old women; that the increase of English influence must always be disastrous for the Church, unless God chooses to overrule its designs. And though we may look back through history, and congratulate ourselves that Protestants have so

\* Dryden.



almost uniformly loved mammon, or some other selfish consideration, rather than the cause which they deemed to be God's, that they have never been able to act on far-sighted views of exclusively Protestant policy, but that, on the contrary, they have often been the ignorant and involuntary instruments, the very catspaws of Providence for the humiliation of the enemies of the Church; yet it is clear that we cannot on this ground give our sympathies to the English cause, that we cannot wish the success of evil because God has so often brought good out of it.

Then again, as to the habits of intercourse and the impressions likely to arise from our increased communication with the French. In the first place, our greatest national anti-Catholic movements have followed closely on the alliances of the two countries. The friendship of Henry VIII. and Francis did not prevent the Reformation; that of the courts of Louis XIV. and Charles II. was one of the great causes of the Revolution of 1688. And though those alliances were of the courts, ours more than of the two peoples, yet it appears to us that one people has no intention of learning from the other, but only of instructing it. Or if Englishmen learn, it will only be in those things of which the ends are visible and measurable, in which our inferiority can be demonstrated; and not in a subject like religion, which, if tested by material fruits, ceases to be religion, and becomes political economy; and if tested by its fruits in the next world, is immediately carried out of the domain of experience. The Englishman naturally despises the whole world; and it is not till he has actually seen, heard, touched, smelt, and tasted the results of other systems, that he can be brought to form the suspicion that they may be as good as his own. If he is at present at all wavering in his faith, it is only on a few points connected with his commissariat, or manufactures, or cookery; not, we are afraid, with regard to his religion. It is something, certainly, if the war has sent the English mind out of itself to gain knowledge of any kind from instructors that it formerly despised; if the least breach has been made in the oak and triple brass of national conceit with which, on every subject, the Englishman is early taught to shield his own ignorance. But in the matter of religion it is not to be taught, but to teach, that he aspires. Nothing could be more ludicrous than the way in which the pedagogic spirit manifested itself on the occasion of the late visit of the King of Sardinia. That personage, having got into some few difficulties with the Holy See, presented himself as likely to be a favourable recipient of Protestant instruction; so, from the first moment that he put his foot on

these shores, he was assailed by Young Men's Christian Associations, Shaftesburys, Mawworms, Lord Provosts, fanatics who kidnap Catholic orphans in the streets and by force and by law bring them up Protestants, and whisky-consuming Scotch Sabbatarians; and had an amount of sermonising inflicted upon his unwilling ears, which seems to have had the happy effect of disgusting him with Evangelical cant, of disposing him to arrange matters with the Roman Sec, and which has certainly drawn from his secretary-of-state a just and cutting rebuke, which, however, we are afraid will fall harmless on the methodistical stolidity of the Lord Provost of Edinburgh and his very silly companions. No, England is evidently called upon to teach her allies, not to be taught by them. And as man's nature is more prone to evil than to good, as the error that gives a charter to libertinage is more easy and comfortable than the truth which forbids it, the Catholic surely has a right to fear more evil to Catholic lands from the alliance of England than he can hope of good to England from the confederation of Catholic states. Small blame to him if he views with satisfaction indications of a cooling of the first love of France and England, and of an approach of the former power to nearer relations with Austria, the Catholic power which, if sufficiently strengthened, could be the only effectual barrier against the progress of Russia towards the south.

Again, whatever the Church may hope from changes abroad,—and that it may hope much, that times of change admit of all good as well as all evil, the improved condition of the Church since the outbreaks of 1848 proves,—here in England the case is different. Abroad, in France and Catholic Germany, the heart of the people is sound; the country is Catholic; though the philosophers, like scum, had bubbled to the surface, and covered with their film the clear depths beneath. Ireland is in this same condition; but for us in England, what can we hope from changes? The great parties of Evangelicals and of Liberals are equally our enemies, and we must still patiently await years of silent internal growth, amid outward contumely, before we are in a condition to influence a movement, before we have weight enough to bias the rolling ball. We grow best—like the summer-grass—in the dark, in quietness. The agitation which followed the establishment of the hierarchy doubtless stayed the tide of conversion for a time; and it is only now beginning to resume its flow. As a party, we are not firm, knit, weighty enough to gain any thing by the tempest. When crockery and cannon-balls roll together on the deck of the tempest-tossed ship,



the earthenware gets smashed. Something we may hope from the necessities of England. She is not likely at the present moment to do any thing designedly to disgust the Catholic soldier whom she finds so useful; it is only a pity that the said soldier cannot be kept more *au courant* with regard to the dealings of such persons as Major Powys, of boards of guardians, and of the managers of county-schools with the wife and the children whom he leaves behind him. But, except in cases directly connected with our Catholic soldiers and sailors, it is difficult to anticipate much good from the war in reference to our political position.

The rest of our arguments for the war are of such a theoretical and general character—so uncertain and viewy—that they could never justify the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of human beings, and all the other individual horrors of a state of hostility. The Catholic will doubtless feel a kind of satisfaction at seeing the vengeance of God fall on a Government which has been the most persecuting power of modern days; but the Catholic, who is also an Englishman, will hardly find great consolation in the thought that the vengeance of God is once let loose. It may begin with Russia, but how long will England escape? If the present sufferings of the schismatical nation of the North are really a retribution for its persecution of the Catholic Church—if the sword has been drawn from the scabbard in this cause—if it is for this that vengeance is abroad—then certainly sooner or later it will find us out, we shall feel its violence. The Russian is a really religious people,—that is, Catholic at heart, and schismatical only through ignorance, and through the chicane of a despotic government, that uses the national Church as a mere tool for its own purposes. There is a reality, a solidity, a respectability, a kind of honesty about its religion, about its opposition to the Church, about even its persecutions of her priesthood, that is sought for in vain amid the cynical hypocrisy of English Evangelicals. The religion of England is the impersonation of narrow-mindedness, of sourness, of all that is ridiculous, grovelling, dishonourable, and unjust. It only seeks to propagate itself by corruption, by low cunning, by appeals to the most degraded parts of our nature, by threats, by starvation, by force. Infidels and atheists it leaves at peace; it tolerates halls in London where Sunday by Sunday the “God of the Bible” is held up to execration and ridicule, and compasses sea and land to make one proselyte from the Catholic Church; even though in so doing it make him a hypocrite, a perjurer—tenfold more a child of hell, if possible, than itself. It will not comfort those whom God has smitten;



it will not relieve their poverty, their nakedness, their famine, their ignorance, but at the price of their conscience. It gives soup, and oatmeal, and clothes; but only on the condition of apostasy. It preaches private judgment, and gags our mouth. Wives and daughters and children are free to listen to the Cummings and the Armstrongs and Achillis, to defile their ears and their consciences with the slanders of libertines and liars, to accept their tracts, to study their statements; but the English father and husband, the hater of slavery, the emancipator of niggers, the freeman who stands up for every body's right to believe as he pleases, and to act as he believes, at once becomes a turnkey, a jailor, almost a Jack-Ketch towards his own flesh and blood whom he catches going to a Catholic church, reading a Catholic book, or, worse than all, putting himself into communication with a Catholic priest. While the bigot howls against us for shutting up the sources of knowledge and stifling free inquiry, he puts into practice every *ruse* to prevent men from hearing both sides of the controversy, and from amassing the materials necessary for judging for themselves. Discussion is free, but the Catholic Church must be gagged. And it is the mass of men of this kind that forms the ecclesiastical government of England; there is no secretary of state for religion,—the people itself holds the portfolio of public worship and education. If it was *bonâ fide* a question between the governments of the respective countries, it would be difficult to decide on their comparative merits; but if the question is, whether Russian or English supremacy would do more harm to the Church, we must surely adjudge the unenviable prize to our own people. The Russian is a nation only accidentally uncatholic, which might, by a stroke of the Czar's pen, be converted into the most Catholic, the most religious people of Europe. The kernel is sound, it is only the external husk that is poisoned. On the other hand, the outside of the British fruit may look more promising, but the apple is rotten at heart. England is not to be converted wholesale: each person must be separately prepared, taught, and trained. There is no wide-spreading influence, no contagious enthusiasm; there is only the slow and somewhat disheartening labour of the mere gleaner of souls, who only goes over the field after the devil has reaped and carried the harvest. When the Russian is brought into free contact with the Catholic Church, he forthwith wonders what keeps the two communions apart. Reasons of state soon prove powerless before the unitive force of Christian faith and charity. But the Englishman in Catholic lands always forms a little coterie of his own, sits under some disreputable fugi-

tive parson, and keeps himself aloof from the religion which rebukes his own infidelity; ensconced behind the bulwark of his ignorance, he persuades himself that it is his duty to carry on a petty warfare of contempt and injuries against the religion of the people among whom he lives, and to ally himself with every loose fish, every freemason and free-thinker that happens to come across his path. An evil day would it be for the Catholic states of the Continent when these little knots of exemplary Britons acquired any real power.

Again, whether the events of the present war are really and practically teaching the Russian government the evils of their schismatic isolation from Catholic Europe, any more than they are teaching the English people the necessity of a Catholic league, and of the solidification of Catholic enthusiasm, as a barrier to the advances of a fanatical schism, is a point on which we have no evidence, beyond the vague report of some improvements in the condition of the Catholic Church in Poland, and of the recall of some of the exiled priests from Siberia. But in our own country we certainly do not see that either the alliance with France, or (much less) any political consideration as to such use of Catholicity as we have pointed out, has as yet led to any improvement in the behaviour of the people towards us. We cannot see that the tone of newspapers or of books has improved; rather the reverse: the literature of England is perhaps becoming still more ribald in its abuse and misrepresentation of our religion. We see no inclination to do justice to Catholics; as was ever the case, the Protestant is still able to appropriate any stray idea of ours, to take out his patent for it and pocket the profits. Miss Nightingale is only a second-hand sister of charity, and yet a testimonial-fund is being raised to her as the inventor of a practice which our nuns have been silently employed in for centuries. We do not see that the ridiculous figure which the English nation made of itself on the occasion of the "Papal-Aggression" excitement has at all opened its eyes to its fatuous absurdity; as soon as the Austrian Concordat (which, as we have shown, is one of the most significant and important anti-Russian achievements of the present day) offered the opportunity, the old hubbub was renewed; all the papers, from the great bull-calf, the *Times*, to the last penny journal just hatched, with its egg-shells still sticking to its tail, bellowed, and grunted, and brayed, and chirped in most unmusical concert, singing precisely the old tune, accompanied by precisely the same

"Orchestra of salt-box, tongs, and bones,"



with the same furious grimaces and impotent threats which greeted the old original Papal aggression. Then, with what charity did our good friends behave on the question of the Bible-burning, which, on their own confession, was as much (if not more) their own act as that of the little boys who wheeled the barrows! In fact, look where we will, we see the same domestic tyranny exercised in regard to converts; the same municipal tyranny in regard to our poor and orphan children; the same insulting assumption of our idiocy and incapacity, of our dishonesty and hypocrisy, of our superstition and slavish fear. Still they talk of us as "poor unfortunate men;" or describe us as fiends with horns and tails; or preach about us in such a way as would (if the English were a more excitable people) endanger our windows and hay-stacks, if not our limbs and our lives. If the war does teach the Russian to let the Catholic alone, or if it makes the Englishman confess that, as the Catholic league of Europe alone enabled it to stand against the advance of Mahometanism; as the first introduction of national jealousies into that league broke up the crusade and compromised the cause of Europe; and as it was nothing but Catholic enthusiasm which finally triumphed at Lepanto and at Vienna,—so now, when another danger threatens, when another fanatical power, professing a religion which it offers at the point of the bayonet, threatens to burst like a storm over Europe, the hope of Europe is still in the Catholic Church,—in that only body which the Russian persecutes, that one communion which cannot be forced into submission to his tyranny. The natural and sole abiding confederation against Russia will be a league of Catholic states; to which England will probably be drawn by commercial considerations, and by her fear of the advance of Russia in the East. It is difficult to speak to the belly, because it has no ears; and it is difficult to speak to Protestantism, because it has no brains. We can only hope to address it through its pocket, and to say and prove, "Your interest lies there; that is the path of the iron and cotton trade; here you will sell most buttons, and buy corn cheapest."

To the last argument which we adduced in defence of the war, it is easy to answer, that the world may be pacified and levelled for the march of Antichrist as well as for the march of Christ; that whatever would ultimately happen to the Church in the event of Europe becoming Cossack (and it does not seem unlikely that the Russian would, like the Arian Goth, soon conform to the faith of the people whom he had overrun), the case would probably be different if the other Napoleonic alternative came to pass, and Europe found itself



republican, or bound together in a confederacy in which England and English ideas had any predominance. Doubtless political unity, so far as it did away with national antipathies, narrownesses, and conceits, would offer a favourable condition for the spread and consolidation of Catholicity. But an Anti-christian unity—now that the devil is wiser than he was—would not be the same thing as the imperial sway of a Nero or Diocletian, but something infinitely more intolerable to the Catholic Church.

As far as principles are concerned, we are, therefore, just where we were; we are so balanced in our judgments, that we can comfort ourselves in every eventuality. As Englishmen, wherever our brain may be, our heart goes with the Allies; we thrill when we read of Inkerman or the Malakhoff, and lose our appetite for two days after the failure of the 18th of June. But feeling is not reason; we own that nationality is a sentiment often as wrong-headed and as immoral as love itself:

“Love will venture in where it dare not well be seen;  
Love will venture in where wisdom once hath been.”

And when our nationality is cited to plead against our Catholicity, it may be put to great shifts to defend itself. And if we are unsteady and uncertain in our judgments on political questions, it is because of the intricacy and confusion with which religious and political interests have become mixed together. The fault, we take it, is not in ourselves, but in those who have caused the original confusion; in those who first used religion as the mere appendage and instrument of nationality, of government, and statecraft. We have every intention of rendering to Cæsar his dues, as well as His dues to God; but when the partisans of Cæsar have intentionally disturbed the waters, have confused the limits of the respective provinces, they cannot be surprised if we hesitate before we act. We have great respect for the price of the funds, and for the interests of cotton; but we conceive that the interests of Christianity are somewhat heavier in the balance.

## ST. OSWALD'S ;

OR,

## LIFE IN THE CLOISTER.



## CHAPTER X.

## MRS. OGLEBY'S CRITICS.

BREAKFAST was over on the morning after the dinner-party at Burleigh, and Mrs. Ogleby stood looking out of one of the windows of the dining-room, gazing at the noble prospect, with Sir Reginald Somerset by her side.

"What a splendid scene!" cried the lady, "and how worthy of the ancient mansion from which it is viewed! But do you not think, Sir Reginald, that those trees, which half-exclude the turrets of Eccleston Castle, and the distant horizon besides, are rather an eye-sore to the landscape? If I might venture a suggestion, I should ask why you do not cut them down?"

Now Mrs. Ogleby was perfectly well aware that the trees in question were on the Thorburn estate, and that Sir Reginald did regard them with hostile feelings. But her assumed tone of ignorance was perfect.

"Your taste is most discriminating," responded the baronet graciously. "Those trees *are* a blot on the landscape; and if they become mine, they shall come down immediately."

"Dear me," said Mrs. Ogleby, "I am quite disappointed; I always flattered myself that the whole of this vast range of country belonged to the same proprietor. Surely, Sir Reginald, the whole of this magnificent landscape *ought* to be attached to Burleigh. Burleigh alone is worthy of it."

"You are right, my dear madam," responded Sir Reginald; "it ought. There is no doubt of it. I feel that it is due to myself to secure the property in question, even at the cost of some little sacrifice."

"Oh, Sir Reginald," rejoined Mrs. Ogleby, "it cannot be any sacrifice to a person of your position. The thing must be a trifle to the possessor of Burleigh Manor."

The baronet was convinced that, whether it was a trifle or not, it ought to be a trifle. He therefore smiled his approbation, and proceeded to his study to look over certain papers

relating to the purchase, with a more fixed determination than ever to complete it.

In less than a week afterwards, Mr. Croft, Sir Reginald's agent, was surprised by receiving an anonymous letter. The handwriting was unknown to him, and he could hit upon no clue to its authorship. Its contents served only to baffle all conjecture as to the motives of the writer, whoever he might be. That the writer was of the gentler sex it never entered into his head for a moment to suppose; and if he had suspected it, it would never have occurred to him, not being in Mrs. Ogleby's confidence, to impute the authorship of the epistle to that crafty lady.

The letter purported to be from a friend, and informed him that, on the most certain testimony, the writer knew that the Thorburn estate was not nearly worth the twenty-seven thousand pounds which Sir Reginald Somerset was to give for it. And it then went on to suggest that if Mr. Croft was going to lend Sir Reginald the purchase-money, he should secure himself against loss by a mortgage not only on the Thorburn estate, but on a sufficiently large portion of Burleigh Manor.

Mr. Croft sat in amazement over this epistle. How the writer could have come at the knowledge evidently possessed, passed all comprehension. Sir Reginald had already, against Mr. Croft's advice, engaged to purchase Thorburn at the sum demanded; and he had applied to him to lend him the money, which he had promised to supply. What was to be done? The case was clear for any honourable man. The letter must be shown to Sir Reginald without loss of time. In the course of the morning Mr. Croft was closeted with the baronet, and the epistle itself lay open upon his table.

Sir Reginald was confounded, surprised, angry, and intensely magnificent. A host of conflicting feelings tumbled over one another in his bosom. He would denounce Mr. Thorburn as a cheat—he would treat the letter with contempt—he would ferret out the author and make him prove his words, if it cost him half his fortune—he would possess the Thorburn estate at all risks—he was confident the whole thing was a trick, and the estate was worth *more* than twenty-seven thousand pounds—he was vexed to think that Mr. Croft himself had cautioned him against signing any papers in a hurry. The result was a compromise of various emotions. He would complete the purchase without making further inquiries, in a right royal spirit of splendour; and he would be conscientious in the same princely style, compelling Mr. Croft to accept such a security on the Burleigh property as



would protect him against all possible loss. On the whole, Sir Reginald had never before felt so like a sovereign monarch in all his days. He announced to Lady Somerset in private that he glowed with the pride of an honourable man, who had acted worthily of his ancient pedigree, and who was a very model of human virtue to beings of an inferior race. In due time he entered on the possession of the coveted acres, cut down the obnoxious timber, and almost forgot how large a slice of Burleigh was already mortgaged to his own agent as security for his twenty-seven thousand pounds and various other sums before advanced by the same ready lender. All that he told his wife, he told, under the seducing influence of her judicious flatteries, to Mrs. Ogleby also; and a little more into the bargain. From Lady Somerset he concealed the full extent of the charges gradually accumulating upon his hereditary property, and the large amount in which he was already indebted to Croft. But Mrs. Ogleby suffered nothing to escape her penetration; and though the baronet only spoke oracularly, she knew enough of the facts of the case to enable her to interpret his mystic allusions to her own full satisfaction.

Having thus, as she considered, been the means of materially aiding Mr. Croft's fortunes, her interest in him proportionately increased. For human nature in this little lady was like human nature in general; she felt more attraction towards those whom she benefited than towards those who benefited her. The steward's personal merits gained ground in her eyes, and there arose in her breast the slightest possible germ of a wish to marry him for his own sake. But now sprang up with it the usual doubts and fears attendant upon a genuine affection. Faint as was the feeling in her calculating and self-reliant heart, it was enough to cause her just the semblance of a consciousness that she was not sure to win him if she chose to attempt it. Moreover, he was to her a mysterious person. Whether he was a cold man of the world, or a hypocrite, or an honest man, she could not decide, with all her speculations. His countenance, ordinarily so passionless, and his manner, always polished and earnest, but never (at least in her presence) excited, gave no clue to his real character. On the whole, after much meditation, and after learning as much of his history and life as she could cleverly extract from others, she came to the conclusion that he *was* a religious man; possibly—as she styled it—even fanatical. At any rate she conceived that she now saw a way to his respect, and so afterwards to his attachment. He must learn to look upon her as a person of devoted piety, to whom the very idea of a matri-

monial speculation would be absolutely abhorrent. Whether or not she took her steps judiciously, in accordance with this conviction, will hereafter appear. At any rate she lost no time in laying down her plan, and in commencing its accomplishment.

It was not long after she had settled her measures, when she was the subject of a conversation at St. Oswald's between three of the Fathers with whom the reader is already acquainted. Father Benedict, Father John, and Father Jerome, were walking to and fro in the shady paths of the monastery-garden, when the last-named of the three suddenly interrupted the course of conversation by exclaiming—

“By the way, that reminds me that I had something to say to you about this Mrs. Ogleby who is staying at the Somersets’.”

“Humph!” ejaculated Father John; while the novice-master remained silent, and looked rather curiously at Father Jerome.

“She seems a very interesting person,” continued the first speaker. “She has been frequently here to consult me; and now ——”

“Too often!” interrupted Father John.

“I can’t think that,” said Father Jerome, “considering the peculiarities of her position, and the great troubles she has to undergo.”

“Her position ought to make her all the more circumspect,” rejoined Father John, with a slight degree of acerbity.

“I really don’t see that she is at all indiscreet,” rejoined the other. “She has suffered immensely.”

“She does not look like it,” again interrupted Father John.

“She has indeed, I assure you,” replied Father Jerome; “and she tells me that now, for the first time, her mind is acquiring repose.”

“Is it?” asked Father John, in a tone of incredulity.

Father Jerome seemed vexed, but he went on;—

“She does not seem perfectly satisfied with the advice I have given her, and has begged me to consult as many of the Fathers on her circumstances as I can.”

Father Benedict here looked very serious, and Father John exclaimed—

“I believe the woman’s a ——” “humbug,” he would have said, but that it suddenly occurred to him that he would be guilty of a glaring breach of charity in respect of a person of whom he knew little. Father Benedict, however, took up the conversation.

“As she has spoken so pointedly to you,” he said, “I

really don't see that there can be any harm, but the reverse, in saying what I think about the matter. Mrs. Ogleby once talked to me in the same strain, and I fancy she has been trying us all round, and has got mighty little encouragement for her pains. If you will allow me to say it," he continued, turning to Father Jerome, "I believe the acute lady is trying to impose upon you."

"Really you are very uncharitable," retorted the other, not particularly pleased. "Surely I have my eyes open, and am not likely to be deceived."

"Almost any body may be deceived by a clever person, such as I take this Mrs. Ogleby to be. They go upon the plan of finding out one's weak points, and so blinding us to the deception they are practising upon us."

"I must say I think you are discussing another person's character with unjustifiable freedom," replied Father Jerome.

"Pardon me," rejoined the other. "She herself requested you to make her the subject of conversation with the Fathers. At least this is the only way I can interpret her strange request. I should have rigorously kept my opinion of her to myself, if charity had not required me to speak out."

"Charity to whom?" asked Father Jerome.

"Charity to her, who I fear is playing a deep game," replied Father Benedict; "and charity to you, who I fear are so good-natured that you judge her unwisely, and from mere kindness and unsuspectingness may do her serious harm."

"I am convinced you are wrong," rejoined Father Jerome; "and I see you are so prejudiced against the woman that it is useless to consult you about what she asked me."

"I dare say I should suggest to you to give her the very advice I once gave her myself when I met her at Burleigh, and which she clearly does not at all like to follow."

"What is that?"

"Not to talk to the religious about herself, her feelings, or her affairs generally. I am convinced that her object is notoriety. Besides that, I don't like spiritual 'button-holders,' as Lord Chesterfield would say."

"But she says that she always derives so much benefit from what I say to her," said Father Jerome.

"Fudge!" loudly exclaimed Father John. "She takes you in by ——;" and again he pulled up, thinking he had better hold his tongue.

"Well, what were you going to say?" asked Father Jerome. "Pray don't stand on ceremony, I beseech you."

"As you ask me, then," said Father John, "I will say it. My dear brother," he continued, laying his hand on the



other's arm, and dropping all the usual bluntness of his manner, "this woman flatters you. She makes you think well of her, by making you think well of yourself. Beware of her, I entreat you, for her sake, for your own, and for the sake of us all."

Father Jerome's countenance fell. Was this the truth, or was it a sheer piece of uncharitableness and hastiness? He was puzzled, but he was not convinced. Mrs. Ogleby's clever flatteries had gone so deep into a mind too prone to over-estimate itself, that they could not be dislodged in a moment. He took the remonstrance, however, in tolerably good part; at least so far as to determine conscientiously to be upon his guard; but he was far from having his eyes fully opened to his own infirmity. The conversation then changed.

"To turn to a very different person," said Father John, "did you remember to give Mr. Croft's message to Father Procurator this morning?"

"I did," said Father Benedict, to whom the question was addressed. "What a liberal man he is! I think, considering his means, he is one of the most generous Catholics I ever met with."

"I don't know what his means are," said the other, "but I am sure that in actual amount he is by far *our* largest benefactor. And from what I hear, this is but one of many places where he pours out his wealth. He absolutely spoils all the poor people he has to do with. His servants and labourers are ruined for work elsewhere, he pays them so excessively, and I am told never utters a reproof to them."

"But what a strange manner he has," said Father Benedict; "I never saw such gravity in all my life. There is a mixture of seriousness, intensity, and thoughtfulness about him that quite oppresses me. I respect him excessively, but I own I am a little afraid of him. I don't think I ever saw him smile. And yet he is such an excellent fellow."

"Every man has his own character," said Father John. "One man is secret, like you ——"

"Thank you for the compliment," interrupted Father Benedict, laughing.

"Another is grumpy, like me," continued the other. "And a third is like you, Father Jerome, heroic and grand."

Father Jerome thought there was more irony than sincerity in this account of his character, but he laughed it off as well as he could.

"Have you heard of Croft's last gift to the church," said Father John,— "that is, of his next gift; for it is not yet arrived, though ordered."

"No," said the others. "What is it?"

"A canopy to carry over the Blessed Sacrament, which I hear is to be the most splendid piece of work of the kind in England. I am afraid to say what I am told it is to cost, the sum is so enormous."

"Well," said Father Benedict, "it is delightful to see a man like Croft, who makes money so fast, yet so free from the love of it, and so devoted to doing every thing possible in honour of our Blessed Lord. Lawyers are proverbially keen-sighted. It is pleasant to see them as keen-sighted in spiritual things as they are in temporal. As to Croft, there's no end of the labours I hear he undertakes for other people. He's as sharp in ferreting out a person in distress as his pettifogging brethren are in ferreting out clients."

"He's a good fellow as ever I knew," said Father Benedict. "But there goes the bell for Vespers."

And the three Fathers hastened into the church.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### CURIOSITY AND ITS RESULTS.

THE above-related conversation terminated just about the time when Mrs. Ogleby was enabled to accomplish a wish she had for some little period entertained. She was a good walker, feared no weather, and in the course of her strolls had made herself pretty well acquainted with the whole neighbourhood of Burleigh and St. Oswald's. But there was no spot which more frequently attracted her attention than a certain comfortable abode, possessed and inhabited by Mr. Croft. Every thing bespoke the easy circumstances of its owner. It was a solid-looking mansion of the days of George II., of red brick with white stone facings. It was not ugly, though it was not handsome, or even picturesque. It was thoroughly comfortable-looking. Some thirty or forty acres of capital land surrounded it; the shrubberies, gardens, and offices, were exactly what they ought to have been, neither too large nor too small, neither shabby nor pretentious; and Mrs. Ogleby was of opinion (as indeed were other ladies of the country) that it wanted only the delicate finishing graces which a female hand could bestow, to make it as perfect a little place, of its kind, as any one need wish to dwell in.

On the afternoon in question Mrs. Ogleby was surveying the house from the turnpike-road, and devoutly wishing that

by some fortunate chance she could penetrate into its interior. Chance, on a former occasion, had enabled her to see a good deal of the grounds; but with her present plans it had become a great object with her to inspect the house itself. As she now strolled slowly along the road, revolving many things in her deep mind, a sudden thunder-clap startled her from her reverie; and instantly afterwards she heard the sharp but not unmusical voice of Mrs. Longford calling to her from behind in tones of anxiety and alarm. Turning round, she beheld the little lady running towards her, and every now and then hastily looking up into the heavens, with manifest dread of the approaching storm.

"Oh, my dear Mrs. Ogleby!" cried she, as soon as the two ladies had met, "what *shall* we do? This dreadful thunder! I am always frightened out of my life at thunder; it is so dreadful. And here comes the rain too. And this beautiful green silk gown of mine! it will be ruined utterly. Oh, what shall we do? Do you know I once had a dress,—lilac-coloured it was, and the General always used to say—oh, good gracious, what a dreadful clap! I'm sure we shall be struck! And there's not a cottage near for us to run into. Do tell me what to do, Mrs. Ogleby."

And the poor woman's frightened looks would have disturbed any body's heart, except one as cool and collected as Mrs. Ogleby's. For Mrs. Ogleby despised Mrs. Longford from the bottom of her soul. She counted her a fool and a bore, and usually troubled herself as little as might be to pay any remarkable attentions to one from whom she thought nothing was to be got. But now an idea struck her. In Mrs. Longford's company she might venture upon taking shelter at Mr. Croft's from the storm, which was really coming on so severely as to have justified a neglect of any ordinary rules of etiquette. Still, she was delighted to have Mrs. Longford as a companion, and the more so, as a method for employing this latter lady in her schemes upon Croft had more than once crossed her mind. Few people knew human nature, at least in its infirmities, better than Mrs. Ogleby; and in her many meditations as to the best means for ingratiating herself with the gentleman in question, it had occurred to her that if she could induce him to believe that Mrs. Longford wanted to marry him, and at the same time could persuade Mrs. Longford that Croft was secretly pining for love of her, such manifestations of absurdity on the part of the lady would inevitably follow as would annoy Croft beyond endurance; and it was Mrs. Ogleby's plan that she herself should treat him with a respectful deference and timid regard for his opinions which



should contrast forcibly with Mrs. Longford's follies, and thus insensibly draw him on to regard herself with a tenderer feeling. As he was a lawyer, she was aware that at any time she could invent grounds for consulting him in his professional capacity, and so could ensure any reasonable amount of personal interviews. As she was a person capable of rapid decision at any moment of emergency, she now suddenly matured this part of her scheme, and lost not a moment in seizing the opportunity placed before her.

"Dear Mrs. Longford!" she exclaimed, pretending to be out of breath with alarm, "I'm so delighted to see you. My nerves are dreadfully shaken, and a thunder-storm drives me to distraction. I don't know what to advise you; there seems not to be a cottage that we could reach without being soaked through and through before getting to it. But let us run at once under those large trees; it will be some time before the rain gets through the branches, and perhaps by that time the storm will be over."

So saying she seized Mrs. Longford's arm, and drew the terrified and overpowered lady into the temporary shelter.

"There!" she cried, as they placed themselves against the knotted trunk of a huge elm, "that will do for a few minutes, at any rate. And really it is quite a treat to see so beautiful a scene under such a remarkably grand effect. How strikingly those dense clouds bring out the prominent features of the landscape! Just look at that old red house, that a gleam of light is just now falling upon; whose house is it? It seems a comfortable place enough."

"Oh, don't you know it?" said Mrs. Longford; "that's Mr. Croft's; and a pretty wealthy man he is, every body says."

"Then no doubt his house is as comfortable inside as the outside promises."

"I never was in it but once or twice in my poor husband's time," replied the other; "and Mr. Croft, you know, is not at all a marrying man, every body says, so it's not at all likely there will ever be a lady there; so you know ——"

"Oh, Mrs. Longford," cried Mrs. Ogleby, "Mr. Croft not likely to have a wife! How can *you* say so? If a certain fair lady's heart were not as obdurate as marble, they say that nice-looking house would not long be without a mistress. Men like Mr. Croft, with his serious and solid character, generally like to marry widows, I have observed; at least *handsome* widows."

"Mr. Croft going to marry!" echoed the astonished Mrs. Longford. "You don't say so? Oh, how strange! and such a man too! and a widow! But who is it to be? Do tell me,

dear Mrs. Ogleby; I do so long to know. It really will be delightful. There's not been a wedding here for years and years."

"Oh, fie, Mrs. Longford," said the other, with a crafty smile; "you are *too* cunning. When all the world says a thing, you know, it must be true."

"I protest to you that it is the very first time I have heard of it," rejoined Mrs. Longford; "but, oh, dear! here's the rain beginning to drop through upon us."

"Come this way a little, then; it's perfectly dry here," said the other. "But are you really ignorant of the state of the case?" she continued.

"Absolutely, positively."

"Then I suppose I have said what I ought not to have said; so, if you please, my dear madam, don't let what I have said go a step further. Don't mention it for the world to any one. You know it would look so bad if *you* were to say any thing about it to any one."

"Goodness gracious!" cried the poor lady, almost out of her wits with terror at the rolling thunder, with distress at the thought of getting wet through, and with bewildered curiosity excited by her companion's mysterious hints: "goodness gracious! my dear madam, it's all a riddle to me. You really must tell me what it means. How very strange you look! I'm really quite frightened. Do tell me, what is it?"

"I dare say this accounts for Mr. Croft's never laughing, and hardly ever smiling," continued Mrs. Ogleby, as if talking to herself. "No wonder, poor man, with his noble character, and with such a sorrow upon his mind. How deep it must go into a heart like his! And such a handsome man too!"

"Oh, Mrs. Ogleby, do tell me!" exclaimed Mrs. Longford. "What is it? What is the matter? What have I to do with it?"

"My dear madam," said the other, thus adjured, "is it possible that you have no idea of what every body says, that Mr. Croft has been for years cherishing a secret attachment to yourself?"

Mrs. Longford was so astounded at this intelligence, that she actually forgot to cry out with fright at a tremendous peal of thunder which at this very moment burst over their heads, followed by a sudden increase in the heaviness of the rain. She looked into the face of her companion with a steady gaze of utter bewilderment, turning almost pale with a feeling akin to alarm.

"Why, Mrs. Longford," continued the other lady, "you

look positively frightened. Do you mean to say that this is the first time you have heard of it? Then it is plain I have made a great mistake, and let out a secret which I ought never to have mentioned."

"Oh, Mrs. Ogleby," replied Mrs. Longford, at last gaining breath, "it is impossible! You don't say so? No, it can't be! And I never,—no, never,—gave him one word of encouragement. It really is quite ——. But, come now, I'm sure you're joking. I never did; no! I'm sure—it's all a mistake. Depend on it, it's all a falsehood from beginning to end."

"Well, my dear madam," said the other, "you know best, no doubt. At least you know best about your own feelings; but you must give me leave to say that you are not the best judge as to Mr. Croft's. I assure you every body says you are using him very ill; and that if you don't give him some distinct idea of your wishes before long, you will have much to answer for. But we can talk it over another time. The rain is coming through the branches so fast that we really must run for it."

"Oh, dear! oh, dear! what is to be done?" cried poor bewildered Mrs. Longford: "I don't know what to do. I had thought of begging Mr. Croft's housekeeper to give us shelter; but now, after what you have said—oh, dear! only think!—not for the world—what would people say? And to think of my never suspecting it!"

"I fear we must put etiquette out of the question just now," rejoined Mrs. Ogleby, in a tone of serious firmness. "When life itself is at stake, we must forget the foolish censoriousness of the world."

"Good gracious! what is it?" exclaimed Mrs. Longford; "life at stake! I hope there's nobody going to kill himself, or to kill you or me."

"Why, my dear madam," said her companion, "don't you know that there's nothing so dangerous as to stand under a tree in a thunder-storm? Only last week three people were killed by a stroke of lightning under just such an elm as this; and the tree itself was shivered to fragments. I once knew a whole family who took refuge under—oh, what a frightful flash!—we shall certainly be struck dead! Run, run; come, for your life: any where; into the house; any thing rather than stay here to be killed."

And so saying, she seized the arm of the overpowered Mrs. Longford, and forced her through the storm towards Mr. Croft's gate. At the gate Mrs. Longford stopped, and refused to move.



"Oh," she cried, in miserable agitation, "if Mr. Croft should be at home!"

"But he is not," replied Mrs. Ogleby, extemporising a falsehood, "I saw him riding hard away from the house just before you came up. He must be miles away by this time. Come, my dear madam, run for your life. Look at these frightful black clouds; they are charged with lightning, and will break over our heads in another half-minute."

And away she dragged her victim; and the half-minute had hardly elapsed before they stood at the house-door. Mrs. Ogleby rang the bell violently; and the moment the door was opened dashed into the house, still holding Mrs. Longford by the arm. Mr. Croft's housekeeper, Mrs. Williams, stood just within, and barely escaped being prostrated by the unexpected inroad of the two ladies. Mrs. Williams was a widow, respectable, middle-aged, gossiping, and managing, who had lived for some time in Croft's service. A little boy, her only child, also lived in the house, one of the many recipients of Croft's generous bounty. He now stood by his mother's side, clinging close to her by her gown, and staring at the visitors with the open eyes of childhood when it is half-forward and half-shy.

Mrs. Ogleby threw herself, as if fainting with exhaustion, into a hall-chair, and then announced to the housekeeper in a profuse stream of words the terror of Mrs. Longford and herself at the storm, and begged a few minutes' shelter. The housekeeper made a civil reply, and infinitely relieved Mrs. Ogleby's real fears by informing her that her master was from home, and would not return till the next day. She then led the two ladies into the drawing-room, and left them to themselves.

"This will never do," said Mrs. Ogleby to herself. "I must positively see the rest of the house, by hook or by crook. This tremendously proper old lady must be got at, in some way or other."

The door of the room now gently opened, and the round chubby face of the boy peeped shyly in. A happy thought struck the meditating Mrs. Ogleby. She was on her feet in an instant, and in another had caught the child in her arms and sat down again with him standing at her side. She was not generally very successful with children, for whom in fact she cared nothing; but she was soon on easy terms of familiarity with little Dick Williams.

"What's this?" said she to him, holding up a piece of silver. "And who is it for?"

The boy's eyes glistened.

"That's a shilling," said he.

"No," said the lady, "it's a half-crown. But who am I going to give it to?"

"Me!" cried the child.

"To be sure," said the lady. "And tell mother it's to buy the prettiest cap she can get to put upon these pretty little flaxen curls."

The boy flew out of the room; and whatever he said to his mother, it is certain that he told his tale with sufficient accuracy to satisfy Mrs. Ogleby. A quarter of an hour elapsed, during which she was employed in calming the agitation of Mrs. Longford, and assuring her that there was no impropriety in her staying in the house till the storm had passed, when the door again opened, and Mrs. Williams entered, with good humour on her face and a tea-tray in her hands. With innumerable apologies for the absence of cream, which she declared was all gone sour with the thunder, she then proceeded to console the ladies with as many cups of tea and as many pieces of sweet cake as she could induce them to swallow. Under these cheering influences Mrs. Longford's spirits began to revive, while Mrs. Ogleby summoned up her energies for the task she had set herself; a task which was rendered all the more agreeable by the contemplation of the very good taste and capital condition of the furniture of the drawing-room in which they were seated.

"What a comfortable sofa!" she exclaimed, leaning back in an attitude of perfect enjoyment after declining Mrs. Williams's pressing invitation to drink an additional cup of tea. "And how admirably well kept all the furniture seems to be! I never saw a bachelor's house kept in such good condition before."

The bland smile which this elicited from the housekeeper was not lost upon Mrs. Ogleby.

"I always think there is no house so pleasant as a bachelor's house, every thing is so orderly and regular; no mistress to interfere with the master's comforts, no children to knock things about and destroy them; provided only the master has the rare happiness of having good servants. Is all the rest of the house as comfortable and pleasant as this room, Mrs. Williams?"

"You shall see, ma'am, if you will be so good as to look at it. Master has a few very grand pictures, as they tell me; and now and then gentlefolks come to see them, who of course would not care to see any thing else in it. But somehow master don't seem to care as much as he once did for pictures and that like. It's all kept as neat and as careful as ever, but

his heart seems to be somewhere else. I do believe there's not a more generous gentleman, and thinks more of others, in all the county, let alone other places."

Mrs. Ogleby cast a knowing glance at Mrs. Longford, as much as to say, "You see it is just as I told you." Mrs. Longford was so bewildered that she could say nothing, but silently followed the housekeeper as she led the way to the rest of the house. In the dining-room, among a few really valuable specimens of the old Italian Catholic schools, were two miniatures of a lady and a gentleman. Mrs. Ogleby's attention was attracted by the latter. She was for once unaffectedly interested, and, she could hardly tell why, was puzzling herself to decide who it could be. She was confident that she knew the face, and she undoubtedly admired it; but she could assign it to no living individual.

"The old lady is Mr. Croft's mother, ma'am," observed the housekeeper; "and the other is master himself."

"What! Mr. Croft?" exclaimed Mrs. Ogleby. "Impossible! It's like, and yet it's totally unlike. Ah, I see how it is; the features are the same, but the expression is totally changed. How very singular!"

And she went on examining the portrait, forgetting Mrs. Longford and every thing else.

"Painted many years ago, I suppose?" she asked at length.

"Only seven or eight, I believe," said the housekeeper.

"How strange!" said Mrs. Ogleby, almost to herself. "The change seems impossible. Why this is the portrait of a gay, lively, almost frivolous young man. Certainly age and gravity become some faces wonderfully."

They next went to the library; a large room, so loaded with crowded book-shelves that scarcely a foot of wall was visible. The state of the chairs and tables also showed that it was a room in constant use by its owner.

"And here no doubt Mr. Croft spends most of his time," observed Mrs. Ogleby. "I have no doubt he is a man who loves a library better than a dining-room, and a good book more than a good dinner."

"Bless you, ma'am," exclaimed the housekeeper, "indeed he does. Such a man for reading I do believe never was known. Why he's always in this room, and can't bear to be disturbed. And as to dinners, he cares for them no more than the dead. It quite goes to my heart to see such beautiful dinners as I send up to him come down almost untouched. Tell me of the monks over there at St. Oswald's, why they're a joke to my master. He doesn't touch meat oftener than once



or twice a-week; and as to a good breakfast, I'm confident he hasn't had one for these many years past."

"You don't say so!" interposed Mrs. Longford, now speaking for the first time since they had left the drawing-room. "Really, Mrs. Williams, it seems quite shocking. How very cross I should be, if I had always to go without my breakfast!"

"No doubt Mr. Croft is never cross with any one," remarked Mrs. Ogleby, in a tone of inquiry.

"Well, as to that, ma'am," said the housekeeper, "I can't say quite that exactly. Not but his temper's very good and kind, and he seems always quite ready to be put upon by every body. I say sometimes he seems as if he'd not a bit of spirit in him. But then, now and then, though not often, he does break out quite awful. We had one maid that went away from the situation only because of the dreadful scolding he gave her about going into that little bit of a room there one day when the door was left unlocked, and he didn't give her leave. She said she wouldn't face such a master again, no, not for five-and-twenty pounds a-year wages."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Longford, looking quite pale, and thinking how alarming it would be if Mr. Croft treated her to one of his passionate outbreaks, in consequence of her trifling with his attachment. "Dear me!" she said, "what can there be so bad in going into a room?"

"Can't say, ma'am, indeed," replied the faithful housekeeper; "I never pry into master's secrets. If he likes to lock up a room, well and good; it's his house, and he has as good right to lock up one part of it as I have to lock up my boxes."

"But what room is it you are speaking of?" asked Mrs. Ogleby, whose curiosity was somehow aroused.

"A little room that you go into by that door," said the housekeeper, pointing to a door so surrounded by book-shelves that it looked as if it opened only into a closet. "There's nothing to see in the room; I've been in it many times, when master has it cleaned out, which he does sometimes. It's quite empty, except for a great sloping board, for all the world like the wooden things they make for young ladies with weak backs to lie upon. I fancy master sleeps sometimes on that board; but, then, nobody *could* sleep upon it, especially a thin man like Mr. Croft."

"Then why is it always kept locked?" asked Mrs. Ogleby.

"Can't say, indeed," replied the servant. "All I know is, that master keeps the key himself; and I don't know where

it is. I have to get it from him whenever scrubbing-time comes round again."

"But I know," suddenly observed the housekeeper's little boy, who was following the party from room to room, and listening silently to all that was said.

"Do you?" said Mrs. Ogleby.

"Yes, that I do," said the boy; "he keeps it in that drawer there—" pointing to a drawer in a writing-table—"for I saw him put it there last Sunday." And the child ran to the drawer in question, and tried to open it. It was, however, as every one expected, securely locked.

"Dick," said his mother, "you're a naughty boy. How often have I told you not to go peeping into places that don't concern you!"

The boy hung his head, and looked sheepish; but Mrs. Ogleby's curiosity was thoroughly aroused. She could not have told why, if she had been asked to explain her feelings; but so it was, that every thing she saw and heard served only to quicken her interest in Mr. Croft and his affairs, and to stimulate her desire to know more of him and his circumstances. She was one of those persons of extremely strong and determined character, who walk independent and untouched through life, until they come into contact with some mind at once more powerful and determined than themselves, and possessing besides some decided attractions to their feelings or their interests. Up to the present time she had never felt the smallest disposition to yield a thought or an act to mortal man or woman. It had never even occurred to her for a moment to think that any human being could control or rule her. But now her hour was come, and she felt that it was come; and she made no opposition to the newly-born ideas in her mind. From her first meeting with Croft she had been agreeably impressed with his manner and appearance, and the calm steadiness of his countenance and conversation had compelled her involuntarily to respect him. At first she had judged him as she judged every one else, namely, by herself, and had given him credit for no more sincerity or single-minded religiousness than she attributed to the rest of the world who were gifted with brains. For Mrs. Ogleby was one of that common class who suppose that earnest religious devotion is the quality of inferior minds alone; the refuge of weak heads and soft hearts, who, unable to stand alone among their fellows, cling to devotional practices for the sake of the comfortable emotions they thus secure, and follow a spiritual guide because they are too feeble to guide themselves. She therefore at once scorned and disliked them; and if a strong

man appeared to be also a religious man, she set it down to deliberate craft, and neither liked him better nor less for his duplicity.

But now, in some inexplicable way, she felt convinced that Croft was a man of another mould. Her woman's heart was touched, and her judgment was influenced also. For she was a woman, after all; and the first entrance of feelings bearing any likeness to true affection and to the submission of her mind to one stronger than herself was so sweet, that she yielded without reluctance to the fascination. As for her notions of moral right and wrong, they remained untouched. The conscience was as dead as ever. It was a purely human homage which she paid to the natural nobility of a fellow-creature, formed, as she supposed, at once to satisfy her ideas of greatness and to please her imagination and taste. The feelings thus gradually elicited made her only the more eager to know more of the man whom she began to regard with an intensity of interest. And curiosity being an infirmity in her character, which a whole life of unprincipled indulgence had fostered into an absolute vice, she felt an eagerness to know the secret of this forbidden apartment—if secret there really was—which a better person would have found it difficult to control. Of that pure and honourable love which prompts to a tender respect for the person beloved, Mrs. Ogleby had none. At any rate, she said to herself, she must gratify her wishes. The only question was, how to do it without exciting suspicion in people's minds. While Mrs. Longford and the housekeeper continued their gossiping, she accordingly pretended to examine the backs of the books on the shelves, with a harmless literary interest, and in a brief space had hit upon an ingenious device.

Appearing to be attracted by some books above her head, she reached a chair, and mounting upon it, took down two or three volumes and carefully replaced them. Then she jumped from the chair, and fell upon the floor with a cry of pain.

"Oh dear! oh dear! what is the matter?" cried Mrs. Longford, while the housekeeper rushed to the assistance of the prostrate lady, and attempted to lift her from the ground.

"Oh, don't touch me!" cried Mrs. Ogleby, "for heaven's sake, don't touch me! I've sprained my ankle dreadfully, I fear. I couldn't bear to be moved just yet. Oh, how sharp the pain is! Could you be so kind as to let me have a glass of water immediately, Mrs. Williams? I fear I shall faint."

"Oh, don't! don't! for goodness' sake, don't faint!" exclaimed Mrs. Longford, stooping down and endeavouring to support her. "Do run, Mrs. Williams, and get some sal-



volatile, or some wine, or some any thing. Oh dear! suppose Mr. Croft should come home and find us all here! What would he think of me? And in his own library too! For goodness' sake, my dear Mrs. Ogleby, pray don't faint. You don't look so very pale, after all."

Here the fallen lady made an apparent effort to rise; but sank down again, with a fresh cry; nor until the housekeeper returned, not with sal-volatile, for it was a thing unknown in the house, but with a lighted candle and a whole handful of feathers, would she make another attempt at moving. Then, when the worthy Williams proceeded to thrust the lighted feathers under her nose, with kind but rough haste, she slowly rose, and hobbled to an arm-chair, with all the gestures of a person suffering from a severe sprain. Meanwhile the storm without was clearing off, and Mrs. Longford was getting into a fidget to depart without delay.

"Well," said Mrs. Ogleby at last, "if you must go, you must; and, indeed, if Mrs. Williams will allow me to remain here for an hour or so, and rest, while you go and send some conveyance to fetch me, by that time, no doubt, I shall feel strong enough to move."

To this proposal the worthy housekeeper, who was zealously occupied in rubbing the ancle supposed to be injured, and rejoicing over the fact that it did not appear to be *much* swelled, instantly acceded; and after a little more talk, Mrs. Longford went her way, promising that her pony-carriage should return in three quarters of an hour, or an hour at the farthest.

"Oh dear, I feel so sleepy!" said Mrs. Ogleby, as soon as she was alone with the housekeeper. "I always do after I have been near fainting. Could I lie down on a sofa somewhere until the carriage comes? It would refresh me more than any thing. Give me your arm, Mrs. Williams, and let me try to walk. Oh," she cried, after rising from the chair, "it's impossible. I don't think I *can* move just yet. Do you think I might stay quietly here till the carriage comes? I am sure I could sleep in this very comfortable chair; and then perhaps the man that brings the carriage might help to carry me down stairs."

Mrs. Williams could not say nay, and half-unwillingly she at length left Mrs. Ogleby to her slumbers, promising that no one should disturb them. The moment her retreating footsteps were no longer audible, Mrs. Ogleby walked softly to the door, listened, and hearing nothing, turned the key as gently as possible. She then sat down, and for the first time her cheeks really lost their colour. She breathed rapidly, held

her hands tightly one within another, and her eyes looked intently into space. Should she do it, she thought to herself, after all? It would be the first time in her life that she had actually perpetrated such an enormity. She had often read other people's letters and papers, opened their drawers and examined their contents, and listened to conversations not meant for her ear. All this she had repeatedly done, and she knew that many other persons, not of any very remarkable depravity, were guilty of the same meannesses. But here she was contemplating a step further, which if much the same in practical result, was condemned much more severely by the judgment of the world. Often as she had meditated on the possibility of doing such a thing, and conscious as she had been of what the world would say when she had acquired the skill which she now proposed to put into practice, she had never felt so keenly the shameful character of the act for which she was preparing. She sat vaguely dreaming for a minute or two, when the image of Mr. Croft crossed her mind's eye, and instead of quelling the disorder of her brain, only roused her to a more passionate longing to know his character and history.

"Why should I fear?" she murmured to herself, starting to her feet. "No one *can* know it. Why should I care for the opinions of an idiot world?"

And she hastily put her hand into her pocket, and drew from it a knife containing, besides its blades, two or three of those curious little instruments in which the ingenuity of the cutler delights to exhibit itself. The uninitiated would have been puzzled to assign a particular use to all these little strange-looking pieces of steel; but Mrs. Ogleby was well aware, that, though not originally designed for that purpose, one of them was capable of being used as a picklock. This she opened, and with trembling hands applied to the lock of the drawer which the child had pointed out as containing the key of the door of the forbidden apartment. She preferred this course to trying the lock of the door itself; partly because she doubted whether she should be able to open a large and strong lock, and partly because she thought it likely that Mr. Croft would be much more astonished at finding the door unlocked than the drawer.

As she proceeded, her hesitation soon ceased. Conscience, if conscience had any thing to do with her first timidity, lay silent and motionless; and her hands regained their accustomed steadiness. After a short trial she opened the drawer; her eyes sparkled as she saw a large key lying within it; she seized it, walked across the room, listening as she went to

hear if any one was approaching, and opened the door whose security was the object of Mr. Croft's anxious care. A feeling of disappointment and anger with herself came across her as she entered the room, and saw nothing to reward her pains. It was a small apartment, with one window, having the blind drawn down, with no carpet; and the only contents being a single chair, a small and common-looking old mahogany table, and the sloping-board of which the housekeeper had told her, and which she recognised as exceedingly like the apparatus on which she had been made to recline when a school-girl. On the walls there was nothing except a plain cross of black wood. She felt disgusted and confused, and almost smiled at herself for having taken so much pains with so poor a result. Almost unconsciously she went up to the cross, and looked at it closely. She perceived that it had formerly been part of a crucifix, from the holes in the wood made by the nails which had attached to it the Sacred Figure Itself. They appeared to have been torn out by some unskilful hand. The fact did not awake in her any speculations; for no one cared less than Mrs. Ogleby for any of the external objects of religion. Even as a girl she had shown less interest in such things than is usual with children tolerably well brought up.

She was about to leave the room disappointed, when she noticed that the table had a drawer in it. It struck her that there might be something worth seeing there laid by. With some little interest she proceeded to open the drawer; but it was locked. Before employing her picklock she gave another pull; for the table was old and rickety, and the lock seemed somewhat shaky. It yielded to her hand; and as her eyes devoured what she saw, she felt actually faint and sick, and sank upon the chair to recover herself from the strange emotion. In the drawer lay one of those scourges, well known to Catholics under the name of a "discipline." She would not have thought much of that, for she had seen such things in former days; but the discipline before her was covered with clotted blood. Breathing rapidly, and almost trembling, she soon rose again, and could not refrain, though with a sensation of horror, from touching the crimsoned thongs with her finger. She felt that the blood was not yet dried; and this proof of the recent use of the instrument made her literally shudder. She looked on stedfastly for a few minutes, then closed the drawer, retreated into the adjoining room, locking the door after her, and carefully replaced the key in its original place. She then unlocked the door of the library, expecting that some one might soon be approaching, sat down



in the place where she had been left, and yielded her whole soul to the emotions that rose within it.

Many a woman would have been so affected by the conviction thus acquired of the terrible austerity of Croft's religion, as to have found all feelings of a tender character towards him instantly put to flight; and especially in the case of those who, like Mrs. Ogleby, were conscious hypocrites in their own religious professions. With her the result was altogether different—she felt absolutely fascinated. The intensity of his sincerity, which she seemed to read written before her in letters of blood, served to extort from her vigorous mind a homage more complete than ever. A species of pity for his sufferings also sprang up in her bosom. For the first time since she had grown up she was conscious of a kind of longing to soothe the pains of a human soul, and to be loved in return for her tender sympathies. All these feelings, however, were at the time overmastered by a sense of fear and amazement, and by the consciousness that she was getting into a new world of ideas and passions, and that there were depths in the human breast which she had never yet learned to fathom. When the housekeeper at length entered the library, and announced that the carriage was come, she was really looking extremely ill; and that worthy woman sincerely compassionated her as she hobbled down stairs to take her departure. Mrs. Ogleby was quite alive to the necessity of keeping up the part she was playing, and limped along, leaning on Mrs. Williams's arm, with the skill of an accomplished *artiste*. The fresh air revived her; the sun was now shining brilliantly; the breeze was laden with perfumes; the birds sang from every tree; and by the time she reached Burleigh she had regained her self-possession, and had nerved herself with more energy than ever towards the task of winning Croft. She suffered herself to be half-lifted from the carriage with an air of graceful languor, and thanked Mary Somerset for her kind aid with an apparent warmth which almost conciliated that young lady's regard, and made her think she had been unjust towards her father and mother's guest.

(To be continued.)

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## THE MYSTERY OF THE PASSION AT OBER-AMMERGAU.

[In the sketch of mediæval plays, completed in a late Number, mention is made of the solitary instance in which (as far as we know) they have descended to modern times. An account of the Mystery of the Passion, as still performed at Ober-Ammergau in Bavaria, appeared some years ago in the *Rambler*; it was, however, but brief; and our readers will probably be glad to see a fuller and more complete record of so remarkable a scene as that witnessed by Mr. Raby, the gentleman whose account we originally published, and who has favoured us with the following more detailed and most interesting picture.]

I WITNESSED the performances in 1850, on Sunday, September 8th; and will describe the whole scene, only premising that the miracle-play in question originated as follows:—In 1633, Partenkirchen, Eschenlohe, and Shohlgrule, villages adjacent to Ober-Ammergau, but separated from it by a high mountain, were visited by a sort of plague, which carried off half the population. For a short time Ober-Ammergau, protected by its situation and the precautions taken, escaped the scourge. But a field-labourer of the place, employed for the summer at Eschenlohe, anxious to assist at the wake of his native village, approached it by a secret mountain-path, and brought with him the infection, of which he and all his family, with eighty more persons, died in less than a week. Under the pressure of such a calamity, the community, with the advice of their pastor and the neighbouring monks of Ettal, made a solemn vow of deprecation, engaging publicly to perform every ten years for ever the miracle-play of our Saviour's passion and death, as a homage of thanksgiving and work of edification. The plague is said to have ceased directly; and the following year the vow was fulfilled for the first time. To this votive character of their play, the community of Ober-Ammergau were mainly indebted for being able to save it from total suppression in 1810, as related above. That the custom of acting miracle-plays at the villages was observed from remote mediæval times in the same manner as every where else, local chronicles attest.

I left Partenkirchen at five o'clock in the morning, so as to arrive in good time for the beginning of the miracle-play at eight. After a brisk drive of an hour, I reached the foot of the long and steep ascent to the Ammer valley, and had to alight and walk till the summit was attained. Here I encountered other vehicles filled with company of all sorts, also arrived, as well as numerous pedestrians, including many priests, some of whom had been walking all night long. At last the

cupola of the unfinished church of Ettal, so much admired for its architecture, and still more so for its rich-toned organ, appeared in sight crowning the hill. At this place peasant-boys came running up to us with play-bills for sale. I bought one; and a strangely solemn effect it produced on my mind, as I read the advertisement it contained, as follows:—"The great Sacrifice of Reconciliation on Golgotha, or the history of the Passion of Jesus, according to the four Evangelists, with plastic tableaux from the Old Testament, faithfully presented for devout reflection and edification, by gracious permission of lawful authority, at Ober-Ammergau in Upper Bavaria." At the foot of the bill were the words: "Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow." Impatient to arrive at the spot, I at once resumed my seat behind the driver, who hastened on at full speed, and in another half-hour brought me to my destination, the bleak and straggling village of Ober-Ammergau, with its quaintly frescoed walls and houses. It was a few minutes past seven o'clock, the church-bells were ringing, mortars exploding, and every thing in a state of unspeakable confusion, from the concourse of carriages and strangers. Mass over, I made my way with some difficulty to the ticket-office, procured the best seat I could, and followed the stream of people to the theatre, erected on a large meadow outside the village. On taking my seat, and standing up to look around me, I found myself in a square enclosure of wood of vast dimensions, open to the sky, with rows of benches rising like an amphitheatre from the orchestra to the opposite end, where the view was terminated by the "noble gallery," or boxes, a few reserved seats raised above the rest, decorated with flags and placed under cover. The entire structure, I was told, was calculated to accommodate 6000 spectators. Immediately before me was the stage, surmounted by colossal figures of Faith, Hope, and Charity, painted on the lofty frontispiece. It was not composed of three stories representing heaven, earth, and hell, as I have described in the first part of this essay; but, agreeably to the revised form of the miracle-play as now acted, it was divided into two parts—namely, the proscenium, or outward stage before the curtain, and the inner stage behind it. The former measured 90 feet in width, and projected about 16 feet before the latter. It exhibited, on the right hand, the house of Annas the high-priest, and on the left that of Pilate, both provided with balconies, and connected with the side-scenes by arches, through which the eye caught a perspective of the streets of Jerusalem. These houses shut in the inner stage, about 30 feet wide, the curtain of which hung between them; and this being also



painted to represent a scene in Jerusalem, the entire background of the outward stage displayed a view of the Holy City.

The whole of these scenic decorations, it is true, were executed in a manner rude enough, and no doubt sinned a good deal against correct taste; but it not the less produced a powerful effect on the imagination by its novelty, its significance, and a certain barbaric grandeur of design evinced throughout. Meanwhile the audience kept pouring in at every door, presenting in the bright sunshine a most animating spectacle, especially the peasantry from various parts of Bavaria and Tyrol in their picturesque variety of costume. Their behaviour, too, was fully in keeping with the occasion; a subdued tone prevailing over the din of voices, and a gravity pervading the looks of every one, indicating the consciousness of a solemn act. Indeed, I was struck by observing not a few, as if in church, absorbed in pious meditation, or saying their prayers. Eight o'clock, the hour appointed for the performance to begin, at length struck. After a few minutes' delay, three discharges of cannon gave the anxiously-expected signal, and the orchestra immediately struck up the overture. At first it was scarcely audible in the confusion of people still settling in their seats. Gradually a profound silence prevailed. As the overture drew to its close, all eyes were intently fixed on the stage, where, as the last melancholy chords still vibrate on the ear, a stately figure slowly enters from the right hand, presently followed by seven others gradually diminishing in height to the last. They are met by seven more from the opposite side, and all range themselves in a row like the pipes of an organ in the centre of the proscenium. They are of both sexes, attired alike in white tunics, gloves, and stockings, in flowing mantles of different colours, in richly-embroidered belts and sandals, and wear on their heads gilt coronets with plumes. The solemnity of their appearance is like that of priests issuing forth to celebrate High Mass. On consulting my text-book, I found them styled "Guardian Spirits;" in other words, they were the chorus. Crossing their hands on their breasts, and making simultaneously a deep reverence to the audience, the leader advanced a step and began the prologue as follows:

"Cast yourselves down in wonder to the earth,  
O race beneath Jehovah's curse oppress'd!  
Peace to you! rejoice! Again is grace in Sion.  
Not always is He wrath, the offended One.  
Thus saith the Lord: The sinner's death  
I wish not, &c."

Then, on coming to the words,

“Behold the mystery of God, Moriah’s sacrifice,  
The image of the Cross on Golgotha,”

the speaker and his companions separate right and left, ranging themselves in an oblique line from the pillars of the inner stage, the curtain of which rises and discovers a plastic tableau of two groups: Adam and Eve driven from Paradise, and the Sacrifice of Isaac. Pointing with outstretched hands to these tableaux, the chorus of “Guardian Spirits,” accompanied by the orchestra, sing their history and symbolical meaning. Then the curtain falls, and they take their exit in opposite directions, observing the same ceremonious order as at their entrance.

As soon as the “Guardian Spirits” (whose performance was the more interesting, as exhibiting in its full significance the classical chorus of the Greek drama, only penetrated by a Christian spirit) had retired, the curtain again rose for the first act, and displayed the inner stage crowded with the Jewish populace, strewing boughs and shouting Hosannah! in honour of our Saviour’s triumphant entry into Jerusalem, who presently emerged to view, arrayed in lilac robe and mantle of dark red, sitting on an ass, and attended by His disciples. Slowly He advanced, amid the enthusiastic demonstration, on to the proscenium, where He dismounted and began to harangue the multitude. It was, indeed, something wholly new thus to have our Blessed Lord before me, as it were, in His living shape, to see Him move from place to place, to hear Him speak to the Jews,—the Man-God, the Saviour of the world. I confess I had entertained my fears lest the awful ideal which the mind vaguely forms from Holy Writ and the works of Christian art should be disturbed by a dramatic representation; such a one at least as a set of illiterate peasants might be apt to devise. But happily it was not so. This sensible appearance of our Lord on the stage, if it did not heighten the ideal as it existed in my mind, at least made it clearer to my perceptions, and engraved it more vividly on my imagination. For while the very looks of the actor of the part (a carver in wood at Ober-Ammergau, named Pflunger), the native piety and refinement of his features, his graceful figure, and parted hair flowing over his shoulders, were such as an artist would have chosen to study,—his acting evinced, in the quiet dignity of his gestures and the unction of his voice, despite a certain monotony of tone, that just conception of the character he supported, which produced on every one the deepest impression. He made it felt from his

first entrance, that notwithstanding the shouts of jubilee and tokens of veneration that greeted him on all sides, he was the predestined victim of the fickle multitude, the Lamb that was to die for the sins of the world. The act concluded with the scene of His expulsion of the money-changers from the temple, amid the applause of the Jewish people and the wrath of the Scribes and Pharisees: the whole performed with a homely truth of nature that was very striking, and not without some pious hilarity on the part of the audience at the upsetting of the money-tables, the escape of votive lambs and pigeons, and the rage and avarice of the profane traffickers scrambling to recover their property.

The next act, ushered in without pause by the "Guardian Spirits" as at first, and by a plastic tableau of Jacob's sons plotting against their brother Joseph, exhibited the Synedrium of the Jewish priests and doctors, met together under the auspices of Annas and Caiphas to take counsel how Jesus should be got rid of. The view of this assembly in full debate, and in their variegated robes, was highly imposing. Caiphas was the genius of the scene, and with his crescent-shaped mitre glittering on his head, opened the proceedings in a speech beginning: "Most reverend members of our Sacred College!" This he delivered in so resolute and fiery a style, and in a tone of voice so piercing and sonorous, as most admirably suited the part he supported, and stamped him as an actor of no ordinary powers. His vituperative and artful speech lashed the assembly into a perfect tempest of passion. The aggrieved money-changers were introduced to lodge their complaints; and with a unanimous resolution to put Jesus to death as a blasphemer and seducer of the people, the Synedrium broke up and closed the act.

In the third act, preluded by the chorus as usual, and two tableaux of Tobias parting from his parents, and the Bride in the Canticles bewailing the loss of the Bridegroom, the scene introduced you to the house of Simon the leper at Bethany. Our Lord announces to His disciples that He is shortly to be separated from them and crucified. At this St. Peter, with simple pathos, exclaims: "O Master, my old head can in no wise comprehend this parting!"

Meanwhile you see Mary Magdalen perfume the feet of Jesus with her precious ointment, and wipe them with her hair. The disciples murmur at this proceeding. Above all, the sordid soul of Judas takes offence, so that he cannot refrain from giving vent to a hypocritical burst of anger. "O what a piece of wanton extravagance!" cries he; "three hundred pennyworth! How many poor people could I not have



relieved with it!" Our Saviour's well-known rebuke follows. On His rising to depart, His immaculate and virgin Mother appears for the first time on the scene, lamenting over her Son, whose hour she feels is come, and seeking to detain Him. The fair actress of this most interesting part, it must be owned, did not adequately sustain it. She whined and whimpered too much for the dignity of Mother of our Lord; withal that she seemed deficient in that spirit of resignation befitting the handmaid of the Lord. I was told she had been to Munich to take lessons from an actress of the theatre there, thinking thus to attain perfection; instead of which she only got a few vapid airs which spoiled her. For the due performance of such a part as hers, she should have studied nothing else than the sublime hymn, *Stabat Mater dolorosa*.

The tableau of the fourth act represented King Assuerus on his throne, with his newly-elected queen Esther, the queen of the future, on his right hand, and the rejected queen, Vasthi, in her disgrace an emblem of Judaism, on his left. In this act you see our Saviour pursuing His way to Jerusalem attended by His disciples, who in vain try to dissuade Him from His purpose. Judas is the most importunate on this subject. "Prithee, Master," cries he, "take measures for our future provision. How useful now were those three hundred pence!" "Dear friend," answers Jesus, about to lay down His life for the eternal provision of mankind in heaven, "dear friend, put thy trust in My words." "Am not I keeper of the purse?" rejoins Judas; "who will take care of us, if I do not?" Again Jesus admonishes him, and then proceeds on His way, accompanied by Peter and the rest. Judas alone remains behind. "Three hundred pence!" soliloquises he; "O what a great loss! Did I but possess such a sum, my fortune were made! To throw away such valuable ointment on His feet; I cannot get over the thought! I will no longer be His disciple, I have lost all confidence in Him." At this juncture, a money-changer of the Temple is seen approaching Judas. "Truly, he seems in much perplexity," says the commercial speculatist; "I must see what can be done with him." He then accosts Judas, at first with indifferent questions; then he asks him how it fares with his Master, pretending that he would like to make the acquaintance of Jesus. "Thou?" exclaims Judas, in a tone which sufficiently proves that he has ceased to be our Saviour's disciple, to the crafty money-changer. "Come now, be honest," continues the latter; "if affairs are no longer prosperous with Him, I will be on my guard against Him." "He has Himself said as much," replies Judas, who by this time finds himself surrounded by a

whole troop of buyers and sellers, all eager to stand by their associate. Judas regards them at first with suspicion, and wishes to retire; but they detain him. "Perhaps you also," cries he to them, "would like to be His disciples?" "By all means, if He can hold out to us favourable prospects," answer the gentlemen of the Jewish stock-exchange. "Here are His prospects," shouts Judas in reply, exhibiting to their gaze in an ironical manner his empty purse. He then relates over again in his bitter style the history of the box of precious ointment. It is just the language, just the state of mind favourable to the designs of his tempters. They lose no time in breaking to him the project of betraying Jesus. Judas inquires if he shall thereby be enabled to make good the three hundred pence? They promise him a still greater sum. Remorse of conscience now begins to prick him a little; but the thought of the three hundred pence soon counteracts the effect. "What!" cries he, "shall I let the money slip through my fingers? O thou most precious ointment, now do I know for the first time thy real value!" He agrees to consider the proposal made to him, and fixes a time for discussing it further. Still mistrustful of him, his seducers will not let him quit their company till they have again reminded him of the agreement he has entered into, telling him how they rely on his word as a man, a friend, and a brother. They then take their leave of him. His first impulse is to express his joy at having secured the three hundred pence; for money is his delight, the treasure of his soul. Next his conscience gives him a few more twinges. "After all," says he to himself, "the Master is such a good man, how can I, who have so often witnessed his goodness, think of betraying him?" Beyond this idea of a "good man," it seems he has not been able to carry his appreciation of Jesus, who, on further reflection, he is glad to think will best know how, by means of a miracle, to protect himself. Besides, as he is actually denounced as a rebel against the established religion by the divinely-constituted authorities of the state, his ruin is inevitable, together with that of every one else associated with him. By such sophistical arguments as these he seeks to silence his rising scruples; but cannot help feeling great uneasiness of mind in spite of all his efforts, concluding his soliloquy with the exclamation, while cautiously looking about him: "Surely no one has seen me! I must dissemble. O, that I had but the money!" It was truly a powerful delineation in the rough, this terrible part of Judas. In the scenes that followed later, too, how full of character was the anxious and hurried manner in which he took the thirty pieces of silver counted out to

him by Caiphas, ringing each piece separately on the table to prove that it was good metal. Then came his despair and suicide. What a husky voice, what distracted looks were his, when he burst again into the midst of the Synedrium to demand the liberation of the divine Master he had betrayed! With what disgust and fury did he fling the thirty pieces of silver down upon the floor when his demand was scornfully rejected, and rush out, exclaiming, "The rack of my conscience is too much for me! O, the warning of my Master! I heeded it not! My treachery has excluded me for ever from the number of his disciples. For me there is no hope, no pardon, no salvation more!" What an awful, what a seasonable lesson to the crowd of rustic spectators, among whom perhaps were but too many of that numerous class of Christians who remain faithful to their religious duties as long as they are sure of enjoying a respectable competency in life, but who, as soon as their divine Master begins to talk to them of despising riches, and being ready to deny themselves and renounce the world for His sake, turn round like Judas and desert Him. In the old cast of the miracle-play, as formerly acted at Ober-Ammergau previous to its revision, the suicide of Judas was attended by circumstances still more appalling than those I witnessed. For when about to hang himself, Belial, Lucifer, and other devils appeared on the scene to encourage him in his purpose. You saw Belial show him a convenient tree, then present him with a cord, and exhort him to make use of it with all despatch, telling him his sin was greater than the world itself—too great ever to be forgiven. When Judas, in the last dreadful struggle with his conscience, still hesitated, another devil asked him why he should wish to remain on earth always to be pointed at as a thief, an evil-doer, and the betrayer of his Master? On his yielding, at last, to their infernal arguments and approaching the fatal tree, you saw them officiously assist their wretched victim to lop off the under branches, so that his fall might not be baulked. This done, and Judas having tied himself up, Lucifer finally came up and congratulated him on his spirited behaviour, assuring him that he never was so pleased with him before, and promising him a rich reward in the dark kingdom of hell. We may well imagine what a shudder must have passed through the soul of every one at a scene of such infernal irony as this. As soon as Judas had turned himself off and was dead, a whole swarm of devils fell upon his body, tore out and devoured the entrails, and then carried it off the scene.

In the fifth act were comprised the events of the Last Supper. It was the living reality of Leonardo da Vinci's far-



famed picture. The plastic tableau by which it was introduced,—the Israelites eating manna in the desert,—was by far the most elaborate and gorgeous of all. Upwards of three hundred persons took part in it. I could hardly believe they were real men and women, so admirably was the deception kept up. In the foreground I observed a woman with a child in her arms, certainly not more than three years old, but yet so well trained that it held up its little hands to catch the manna, motionless as a statue, like the best of them, for at least five minutes, till the curtain fell. In this most interesting act all the incidents of the Last Supper, as detailed in the Gospels, were faithfully given. Even where the inspired writers deviate somewhat from each other, as for example respecting the way our Saviour pointed out who was to betray Him, no preference was shown, but each way reverently commemorated. You saw Jesus not only dip His hand with Judas into the dish, uttering the well-known words according to St. Matthew, but directly afterwards put the morsel into the mouth of Judas, bidding him do speedily what he intended to do, according to St. John. When the ceremony of washing the disciples' feet took place, and you saw our Lord gravely put on a woman's apron for that purpose, tying it fast with its long strings, I felt tempted to look round on the audience and mark their behaviour. All was solemn attention, and I could nowhere perceive the least sign of hypocritical levity. The actor, Pflunger, went through his difficult task, it must be owned, with astonishing propriety from first to last. The calm dignity of his bearing, which had struck me at first so forcibly, never failed him in the most trying situations. Moreover, when the imagination is powerfully excited and appealed to, as it was in the present case, the effect is to produce in it a self-creating power which assists in beautifying and in making up for the deficiencies of the performance; for you gladly overlook a variety of exterior circumstances, or else mentally shape them into proper keeping, when it is the pith, the spirit, and soul of a dramatic work which absorbs your attention.

After I had seen Jesus sold by Judas in the sixth act, the events of the actual Passion began in the seventh act, ushered in by a tableau of Adam eating his bread in the sweat of his brow, prefigurative of our Lord's bloody sweat on Mount Olivet. Nine acts more ensued, the whole play thus comprising sixteen acts in all. These remaining acts may be shortly described in their order as follows:

7. *Plastic.* Adam eats his bread in the sweat of his brow. Joab kisses and stabs Amasa. Samson is bound by the Philistines.

*Dramatic.* Christ is betrayed by a kiss, is apprehended, and led away.

8. *Plastic.* The prophet Micaas is struck for telling King Achab the truth.

*Dramatic.* Christ is led before Annas, and struck in the face.

9. *Plastic.* Naboth, though innocent, is condemned to death on false testimony. Job is patient under various insults.

*Dramatic.* Jesus is taken before Caiphas, condemned to death on false evidence, and maltreated by the servants of the high-priest.

10. *Plastic.* The perjured Achitophel hangs himself.

*Dramatic.* Judas returns the thirty pieces of silver, and hangs himself in despair.

11. *Plastic.* The princes and governors accuse Daniel, and urge his being cast into the lions' den.

*Dramatic.* Jesus is taken before Pilate, pronounced innocent, and sent to King Herod.

12. *Plastic.* King Hanon mocks King David's ambassadors.

*Dramatic.* Herod treats our Lord as a fool, and sends Him back to Pilate.

13. *Plastic.* Joseph's coat, stained with blood, is brought to Jacob. The ram for the sacrifice sticking fast by the horns in the briers.

*Dramatic.* Barabbas proposed instead of Jesus to the Jews. The scourging at the pillar.

14. *Plastic.* Joseph proclaimed ruler over Egypt. One of two rams is chosen to be sacrificed for the sins of the people.

*Dramatic.* Ecce Homo! Barabbas is set free, and Jesus delivered up to be crucified.

15. *Plastic.* Isaac, bearing wood, ascends the mountain to be sacrificed. Moses sets up the brazen serpent.

*Dramatic.* Christ carries His cross, is crucified, expires, is taken down and laid in the sepulchre.

16. *Plastic.* Jonas is cast alive on the dry land by the great fish. The Israelites pass the Red Sea, and the Egyptians are swallowed up.

*Dramatic.* The holy women visit our Saviour in the sepulchre. His resurrection, and the appearance of an angel.

It would be a difficult task to describe the succession of various emotions, all of the most solemn kind, with which I, as well as every one else present on the occasion, followed the incidents represented in these acts. What did it matter, indeed, that I knew all that was going to take place beforehand;

that I had read over and over again in the gospels, had heard in sermons, had seen painted on canvas, carved in stations, and engraved in steel and wood, how our blessed Redeemer, under pretence of concern for the law and the good of the state, was dragged from one high-priest to another, from Pilate to Herod and back again to Pilate, each being anxious to devolve on the shoulders of the other the responsibility of putting the messenger of divine truth to death; and how at last He whose kingdom is not of this world was executed as a political delinquent, on evidence the utter falsehood of which they every one alike were privy to? The fact was, I now saw it all with my bodily eyes theatrically exhibited, and this gave it an entirely new interest.

Among other eminent persons who resorted this year to Ober-Ammergau to witness the performance of its far-famed miracle-play, was the celebrated actor and historian of the German stage, Edward Devrient, who afterwards published in the *Augsburg Universal Gazette* a series of papers about what he saw and felt on the occasion. The testimony contained in the following extract from those remarkable papers by so high an authority on histrionic subjects is the more valuable as proceeding from a Protestant.

“When the Saviour,” writes Devrient, “is bound and led away amid scoffing laughter, and all, even His dearest followers, have fled, the impression of the Redeemer’s utter loneliness among His fellow-men is completed in us in an overpowering manner. We have seen and experienced it, how every one, even His most intimate disciples, always misunderstood Him, how He always spoke to them in vain; how in the hour of His mortal struggle with the thought of His own self-sacrifice, it was possible for His four most trusty ones again and again to fall asleep in spite of the urgent warning of their Master. How Peter could do nothing else than just strike a blow, and then run away in order to protest and swear three times over that he knew not the man. How no one, not even John, whom we have seen so tenderly leaning on the breast of his Friend at the Last Supper, goes with Him and says, ‘Where Thou art, there will I also be; and where Thou sufferest, there also will I suffer.’ How all, yes all, forsake Him and flee, and He alone walks forth, bound and reviled, with infinite love in His breast, to die for so wretched, so pitiful a race. This vast solitary greatness it was that first (though only in a village miracle-play) brought home to my soul the power of dramatic art.”

In another passage Devrient adverts to the opinion of modern critics on the drama, that our Lord’s Passion is an unsuit-



able subject for the stage, because the hero only suffers, but does not act; and declares that all his doubts on this point were removed at Ober-Ammergau. His argument is, that the free-will with which our Saviour undergoes His sufferings causes the endurance of every single torment and insult to appear as so many great actions. Buffeted, kicked, and spit upon, scourged at the pillar, and sinking beneath the weight of His cross, He presents Himself to our eyes always in the light of a conqueror. In His silence before Caiphas, before Pilate and Herod, there is a surprising tragic grandeur; in this glorious silence the vanquished world lies at His feet.

I have mentioned how effectively the parts of our Saviour, Caiphas, and Judas, were performed. To these should be added, as also worthy of praise, the part of Pilate; though it must be owned his whole bearing had more of the Turkish pasha in it than of the Roman proconsul. It was truly a grateful spectacle at first to witness his well-meant efforts to save Jesus from the fury of His persecutors. Unhappily, it but too soon became apparent, when he found how utterly unavailing all his arguments, all his asseverations in favour of our Lord were, that he was only a prudent time-serving man, whose love of justice is secondary to the enjoyment of place and emolument; who yields to circumstances, and consents to spill innocent blood, the guilt of which he would fain wash from his conscience by washing his hands. Another striking feature of the performance was the emphatic way in which the Jewish populace played its part; simply because every one acted from a paramount sense of duty alone, and thus gave to all he did, however subordinate, a reality and life in strong contrast with the worldly stage, where scenes of popular tumult usually prove so flat and tame. I may remark here, that none but natives of Ober-Ammergau are allowed to perform in the miracle-play, and that the principal characters sustained are hereditary in different families. The chorus of guardian-spirits, too, did not wholly confine itself to ushering in the various acts with a prologue, or to interpreting the plastic tableaux, but occasionally joined in the dramatic part itself. Thus in the exciting "Ecce Homo" scene it took part with our Saviour against the bloodthirsty multitude clamouring for His death. For example:

*The Jews.* Away with Him! Crucify Him! Crucify Him!

*Chorus.* Alas, the piteous sight! What evil hath He done?

*The Jews.* If thou release Him, thou art not Cæsar's friend.

*Chorus.* Jerusalem! Jerusalem! On thee the Lord will yet avenge His Son!

*The Jews.* His blood be upon us and upon our children!

*Chorus.* His blood be upon you and your children! &c. Chanted as this was by both parties, it may be imagined how powerfully it wrought upon the feelings, and enhanced the tragic effect.

The last act but one comprised the events of the crucifixion. Our Saviour bearing His cross till He sinks beneath it; the Roman captain on horseback leading the way; behind him the two thieves with the executioners; the fiendish exultation of the populace, broken by the piercing wail of devout women, to whom Jesus exclaims, "Weep not, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, for me; but weep for yourselves and your children." Then Simon of Cyrene is required to take up the cross, but demurs at first to do so; till, finding it is for Jesus, he complies at once. All this was played in a manner the most affecting. The curtain now drops, and a deepened feeling of awe seizes the audience as the chorus enters divested of its pomp, and attired in black mantles, belts, and sandals. The leader advances, and begins a sort of prologue, alternately spoken and sung, descriptive of our Saviour's actual crucifixion; while behind the curtain is plainly heard the tumult of the people and the blows of the hammers. Now the chorus retires and the curtain again rises, discovering the two thieves already bound on their upright crosses; while our Saviour still lies on the ground nailed to His, waiting the result of the application to Pilate to alter the inscription, with which Caiphas and the Pharisees are dissatisfied. At last the answer, "What I have written I have written," is brought back, the offensive scroll is affixed, and amid the shouts of the mob, the blasphemies of the high-priests, and the sorrowful cries of His blessed Mother, of Magdalen, and the disciples, Jesus on His cross is elevated aloft. An indescribable spectacle! presenting not a mere picture or carved image, but as it were the reality itself; rescinding the lapse of 1800 years, and transporting the mind to the real Calvary, the living crucifixion on Golgotha, in a manner that no book, no effort of the imagination, ever did or could do. The illusion was complete. Now it was that I thought I saw with my eyes and heard with my ears my crucified Redeemer exclaim, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do;"—to the good thief, "Amen, I say to thee, this day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise;"—to His weeping Mother, "Woman, behold thy son!"—to the disciple, "Behold thy Mother!" Then, while Caiphas and the Jews challenge Him to descend from



the cross if He be the Son of God, the soldiers cast lots for His garments, and put a sponge with vinegar and gall to His lips. But He bows His head, and cries "It is finished!" What then? Are the feelings of all who witness such a sight at all offended because some poor mortars explode for thunder; that a few pasteboard houses topple down as if by an earthquake; that a huge curtain in the background is rent from top to bottom? By no means. Meanwhile I shall not easily forget the sight of stern-looking men around me striking their breasts, women sobbing aloud, and the subdued murmur of emotion which passed through the entire theatre when the centurion on guard, who alone fled not at the mimic horror of nature, ejaculated in rough tremulous tones, "Verily this man was the Son of God." The taking down from the cross, a wonderfully dramatic reproduction of Rubens' grand picture at Antwerp in all its glory, and the laying in the sepulchre, terminated this awful act; for the worthy actor Pflunger the most trying one of all, as he had to remain suspended, with his arms stretched out in the crucified posture, nearly half an hour, so that he was visibly exhausted, and his hands discoloured from the stoppage of the circulation.

In the last and sixteenth act, after our Saviour has risen from the dead amid a blaze of glory, waving His flag of triumph, and the terrified guards have fled, the Scribes and Pharisees come on to search for His body in the tomb. This was the signal for a characteristic outburst from the more enthusiastic portion of the audience, chiefly peasants, whose sense of decorum had not been able wholly to keep them in check from the first, but who now broke all bounds in giving vent to their zeal in our Saviour's cause, and their hatred of His persecutors. They rose from their seats with derisive shouts at the perplexed Pharisees, groans and hisses resounded on all sides, and ironical exclamations, such as, "Ay, ay, seek away; you'll find Him at last!" issued from many a shrill throat, old and young, seasoned with such epithets of insult and abuse as it is not necessary here to repeat. At length the curtain fell, and the pious tumult subsided. A grand allegorical tableau, *The Glorification of the Establishment of the New Covenant*, in which the whole body of actors, upwards of four hundred, took part, and intended to represent Christ triumphant, supported on each hand by His apostles and disciples, while the high-priests and money-changers lay humbled in the dust before Him, formed the finale amid a perfect tempest of pealing Alleluias. The whole performance had thus lasted from eight o'clock in the morning till six in the evening, including the usual pause of an hour at noon for



refreshment, and a further interruption of an hour on account of a storm.

For the rest, suffice it to say, that the edification and instruction I derived from this wonderful exhibition, in spite of all its faults, was such, that I shall ever esteem it a grace to have witnessed it. Withal that I carried away from it a deeper conviction than ever of the unspeakable injury inflicted on the public life of nations by the Reformation, especially in blighting in the bud the Christian drama of the middle ages, and in substituting in its place the noxious and semi-heathen drama of the present day. Surely it is not too much to hope that, however distant, better times are yet in store, when even the theatre will be won back again to the service of the Church, as of old ; when, under her auspices, the dramatic art (of all others the most potent in its workings on the human mind) will develop a perfection of thought and style in the cause of faith and piety equal to what, under the auspices of the Church alone, has already been developed by the sister arts of music, painting, and architecture. Who knows but that the obscure miracle-play of Ober-Ammergau, so wonderfully preserved amid the storms and ravages of modern civilisation, may be the destined link of connection between the bygone era of the infancy of the Christian drama and that of its classical perfection yet to come ?

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## SONNETS TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY.

### I.

#### THE MORNING-STAR.

STAR of the morn ! o'er yonder purple hill  
Reigning alone, amidst a wintry sky ;  
See, one by one, the lamps of midnight die  
Before the rising dawn ; thou reignest still,  
Bright herald of diviner lights which fill  
The rosy East ; in heaven a lonely eye,  
Until His chariot soon approaches nigh  
Who routs the evil birds of night at will.  
Not even before His face thy radiance pales,  
Clear star of hope ; thou brighter eye of morn ;  
Herald of sunshine to a world forlorn,  
Thy stainless rising all creation hails,  
Thy light is His ; His countenance like thine,  
Thy face the mirror of His rays divine.

## II.

## THE EVENING-STAR.

Mirrored in oceans calm, thou lingerest,  
 Bright pilgrim travelling the western heaven :  
 Our sun is gone ; yet for a space 'tis given  
 To watch with thee, our soon-departing guest.  
 Through summer clouds He passed into His rest ;  
 Dark shadows o'er our widowed hearts were driven,  
 Tracing His path through crimson glories riven.  
 Thy lustrous orb still reigning in the west,  
 Not wholly gone, He visits us in thee ;  
 Beneath thy ray, we feel Him not so far  
 In depths of light where glowing seraphs burn,  
 Through thy pure beam reflected o'er that sea.  
 Tranquil thy setting, Memory's lingering star ;  
 Oh, take with thee our joy, till He return.

## III.

The King of day unveiled, when skies are clear,  
 Thy path assigned may cross His noontide face ;  
 Our eyes, awaiting thee, may gauge the space  
 Which severs thine from His remoter sphere,  
 And ours from both ; how far, and yet how near !  
 Thee millions hail, in every distant place  
 The star of love to each admiring race,  
 Throughout all times, in thee united here.  
 The same, thou reignest in the flushing dawn,  
 Or sinking in the west, at golden eve ;  
 The glad precursor of a day new-born,  
 Or hovering o'er the shadowy curtains drawn  
 Across the path where late He took His leave ;  
 Glory of Age mature, or tender morn.\*

*December 8th, 1855.*

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\* By the transits of Venus, which occur only at long intervals, across the face of the sun, astronomers are enabled, with very great accuracy, to measure the sun's distance from her and from our earth. The eyes of all places and all times are centered in admiration of this beautiful object in the heavens ; which, though seen at one time before the sun, and at another after him, is always the same.

## THE FOUNDING OF CLAIRVAUX.

## I.

THERE lie in the depth of yon forest dim  
 A valley and streamlet lone :  
 The forest rings with the wolf-howl grim,  
 The valley with morning and evening hymn,  
 And that water's gentle tone.

## II.

It had threaded for ages the shadows vast  
 Which the ancient forest-kings,  
 Oak and pine and sycamore, cast,  
 Swinging their solemn plumes in the blast  
 Over its murmurings.

## III.

'TWAS still such scene as in days of old  
 Would Druid priestess seek,  
 When the long wind rolled and the thunder tolled,  
 And there her arms to the storm uphold,  
 And with the spirits speak.

## IV.

Then a youth there came with heart of flame,  
 And a smile like his sainted mother's ;  
 And two and two the wild wood through—  
 Though nor he nor they that desert knew—  
 Stepped in his step twelve others.

## V.

Slowly he climbed by the brawling bed  
 Of the sunless rivulet ;  
 Weary and worn his troop he led  
 Through brier and branch and brown leaves dead,  
 And the mossy hollows wet.

## VI.

The pale mild face now bends to earth,  
 Now looks up to rock and tree :  
 Fashioned for camps or for courtly mirth,  
 Brow, lip, and eye show noble birth,  
 And nobler humility.



## VII.

Awful as night grew the hollow vale,  
Huger each mighty stem ;  
The hearts of the twelve began to fail,  
And though hid in the shade, their lips were pale  
When he turned and looked at them.

## VIII.

“ Behold our home and our resting-place ;  
Here let us fast and pray ;  
Here run our race, and by God’s sweet grace  
The path of the soul up to glory trace,  
And live for the Judgment Day.

## IX.

Where the close air dies shall free souls quaff  
Paradise airs, new shriven ;  
Where in darkness this staff I plant shall laugh  
O’er earthly remorse’s cenotaph  
The fresh rose-dawn of Heaven.

## X.

Where dwelleth the fox and the keen wolf gaunt,  
And the owl through shadow winging,  
Angels shall haunt, and the pure choir chaunt,  
And childhood guide the frail foot of want,  
And Christmas-bells be ringing.

## XI.

Bend we our knees ’mong the solemn trees,  
Glory to God proclaim ;  
Jesus decrees, and Mary sees,  
And Saints shall bless through eternities  
The place and its mystic name.”

## XII.

Strange—do men know this desolate dell ?—  
Each bodes a name whose sound  
Of sorrow doth tell, and suiting well  
The dark rock’s tears, the sad wind’s knell,  
And the loneliness around.

## XIII.

But the rapt youth smiles on the scene of doom,  
On the old wood’s solemn pall,  
And signs with cross those aisles of gloom,  
And cries, “ Henceforth this forest-tomb  
The VALLEY OF BRIGHTNESS call !”

XIV.

Saints' words come true : bright, bright it grew ;  
 They warred on the pine and oak :  
 The fresh flowers blew in the sunlit dew,  
 And the wide green pastures came in view  
 To the sound of the axe's stroke.

XV.

In brightness and power came each morn the shower  
 Of the seven-hued prism of love ;  
 From the womb of that hour grew cloister and tower,  
 Like the summer home, like the brooding bower  
 Of the infinite-hearted Dove.

XVI.

Bright o'er it each night fell the sweet blush-white  
 Of purity's blossom-snow ;  
 It was God's delight, and joy to men's sight ;  
 And the names still breathe of love and of light,  
 BERNARD and CLAIRVAUX !

Ω.

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MISPRISION OF FLUNKEYISM.

*To the Editor of the Rambler.*

SIR,—“ Facit indignatio versus ”—“ Fools rush into my head, and so I write.” I cannot bottle up my wrath till next year ; therefore, although my grievance has not much to do with your periodical, will you indulge my outraged feelings with the permission to make a small explosion in your pages ? In our new compound *Catholic Directory*—(the two old ones have coalesced, joined forces, and charge more heavily accordingly)—probably for want of more pertinent matter, we have a series of lists of “ Catholic Peers,” “ Non-Catholic Peerages to which there are Catholic heirs,” “ Noble Catholic Lords not Peers,” “ Catholic Gentlemen of Noble Family,” “ Barons,” “ Knights,” “ Catholic Privy Councillors and Judges”—then we migrate to “ Catholic Ladies of Rank,” and after finishing with people of rank we pass to those of no rank, “ Ladies of Baronets,” “ Ladies (by courtesy) of Knights,” and last, not least, “ Catholic Landed Gentry of Great Britain.” Now, I dare say it is very proper to insert these lists, which will be found highly convenient to secretaries of charitable institutions, priests in want of funds for churches or schools, lay-brothers on quest, and the like ; and will also, I have no doubt, be largely used by begging-letter impostors,

seedy Poles, Italian refugees, and editors of *Heralds*, *Standards*, *Advertisers*, prophetic journals, and other organs of Protestant abuse, who sometimes are in want of ready-made compendiums of Catholic statistics, to prove either our contemptible poverty or our overgrown wealth, our insignificant numbers or our formidable and overwhelming multitudes, or both at once, as the case on hand may require.

Taking for granted, then, the propriety of the lists as lists, will you allow me to inquire through you on what principle the last catalogue, that of the "Catholic Landed Gentry," is made out? May I ask what constitutes a landed gent? Now, for example, I possess a flower-pot. How far does the *bonâ fide* actual possession and usufruct of a flower-pot, with all the rights, members, and appurtenances thereof; with all and every the plants, weeds, leaves, stones, earth, lands, waters, drains, and watercourses, rights, jurisdictions, privileges, and hereditaments whatsoever thereto appertaining, constitute the possessor a landed gent? Or if doubts of the absolute legality and formality of this ground are entertained, any how does not such possession amount to a ground of claim to the title of landed gent by courtesy? And why not treat the gents (by courtesy) as well as the ladies (by courtesy), who have a list all to themselves? Are not the editors of the *Directory* guilty of giving occasion to all kinds of bickerings and heartburnings in our little world by this invidious distinction?

But to proceed. If a flower-pot is not sufficient, is a mignonette-box enough? Will a fore-court do? a back garden? a paddock and dunghill? Where will you draw the line? Does leasehold property constitute a landed gent? a forty-shilling freehold? Must we have five hundred a-year in land to entitle us to write the title after our names? How spacious in the possession of dirt need we be to be admitted into this enviable society? Draw the line wherever you please, say I, only draw it somewhere; tell me I am not one of the landed gentry *because* I have only a flower-pot, whereas I ought to have a square mile of freehold, and I acquiesce; but when you publish a list of Catholic landed gentry, without defining your terms, and I don't find my name therein, of course I am immeasurably disgusted.

There is another thing. Every here and there in the list a little annotation is added to some favoured name, to tell us how long the family which bears it has had root in the soil. Thus, to take the first instance: after the name of Mr. Bastard (a gentleman for whom I have the very highest respect, and on whom I do not intend to cast the slightest reflection) there



is a note appended to inform us that "the Bastards have existed in Devonshire since the Conquest." I have no doubt of it; but why make invidious distinctions? why not say the same for the families that are named immediately afterwards? Have there not been Batemans, Beaumonts, and Beeches as well as Bastards since the Conquest, or, let me add, since Hengist and Horsa, or even since Odin himself? Do the editors of the *Directory* mean to insinuate that these families are of less respectable antiquity than the first? Do they intend to hint that they are more recent than that of my neighbour Zachariah, the marine store-dealer at the Black Doll opposite, who possesses the pedigree of his family up to Abraham? I do something in this line myself. I have an old family Bible in which my genealogy is traced through Jenkyns to Gog and Magog, and so to Japheth and Noe. And I must say, that when antiquity of descent is on the tapis, I do feel personally insulted if my pretensions do not obtain due consideration.

As the editors have treated me with such injustice as to omit my name altogether from the list of gentry, of course I am led to ask what was their motive for putting the catalogues into the book at all? Was it simply to swell out the volume, and justify the extra sixpence? Or was there somewhat of the spirit of Jeames, a little flunkeyism in their breasts? Or worse still, did they give the Catholic body credit for the possession of this virtue, and for the consequent love of Peerages, Court Circulars, news of high-life, and the like? On the part of the Catholic body, I spurn with scorn the ruffian imputation. There is no class of men so free from the feeling in question as the English Catholics; none more independent, more uncontaminated with adulation and admiration of rank, title, and wealth for their own sakes. Why, then, put into our hands a Directory, a book of daily use, crammed with all this apparatus of flunkeydom? Why compel us to handle day after day such a gross and rank occasion of this grovelling weakness? Why should the Jeames within us have his evil concupiscence continually importuned by temptations like these? Who can answer for the numbers of us who, for want of better reading, will gradually come to excite in themselves an unhealthy appetite for this, and so will fall into a surfeit of toad-eating that can do nothing else than study the Peerage and the Court Circular?—a symptom by which this disease may as certainly be discovered as a morbid love of bacon may be inferred from the patient obstinately persisting in licking the pigsty-door.

No, I think I may assert without fear of contradiction,

that we Catholics are wonderfully free from all stupid gaping admiration of rank, titles, wealth, and high-life; though on this latter point I have been somewhat disturbed latterly by some "marriages in high-life" recorded in the *Roman Banner*. I do not for a moment insinuate that the gentlemen and ladies there named do not appertain to this sublime state; but here, as before, I want the terms defined. What is "high-life"? What constitutes a marriage in high-life? Where is the line that divides it from a marriage in no-life or in low-life? Is it a marriage in high-life when only one of the parties is highly connected?—when, for instance, the cook of the Marquis of Carabas marries Mr. Smith's butler? Or must both parties come from high places? Or what the dickens is high-life unless it is my life here in my six-pair-back, No. 5 Cwn Street, Pontydwldm?—I am, Mr. Editor, your obedient servant,

RICHARD AP WILLIAM.

January 17, 1856.

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## Review.

### MACAULAY'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

*The History of England from the Accession of James II.*  
By Thomas Babington Macaulay. Longmans.

THE History of England, by Thomas Babington Macaulay, will cost Thirty-Three Pounds; it will be comprised in thirty-seven very large volumes, consisting of thirty thousand pages; it will weigh more than three quarters of a hundred-weight; and it will be finished about the end of the next century. This at least is what Mr. Macaulay intended when he not only commenced his work, but when he actually printed and published his first two volumes. "I purpose," he says, in his opening sentence, "to write the history of England from the Accession of James the Second down to a time which is within the memory of men still living." He then goes on to state further in detail what he shall do, and in the first three pages of his history repeats the pronoun *I* exactly fourteen times,—an extent of egotistical expression which we take to be perfectly unique among historians of capacity and mark.

The first instalment of the work thus magniloquently heralded was sufficient to show, by its mere bulk, that there is a certain deficiency in Mr. Macaulay's mind which incapa-



citates him from fulfilling the duties of a true historian. Many are the qualifications necessary for these duties; but we apprehend that among the most essential perhaps the first place ought to be assigned to that peculiar power of weighing probabilities, of sifting evidence, and of computing the relative magnitude and smallness of things in general, which constitutes a person of sound judgment. When a man comes to us, and ostentatiously promises to do a certain work, and at the same moment offers us a specimen of his powers of such a nature that we see at once that it is *impossible* that he can fulfil his engagement, we at once suspect that man's work itself. Whatever it appears, we feel sure that it must be hollow. We do not like to trust a man who undertakes distinctly to accomplish what by his own showing must take a hundred and fifty years to bring to an end. Small, therefore, as may appear the circumstance that in his first two volumes Mr. Macaulay got over just four years of his history, we think it was amply sufficient to make the observant reader suspicious of Mr. Macaulay's powers for estimating things in general. It betrayed an ignorance of himself, and a blindness to the facts of human life, which ought to have made every reader say, "This man may know a great deal, he may work very hard, he certainly is very clever, and he is a most brilliant and attractive writer; but he is a man for *show*, and not for *facts*; he thinks too much of himself, and too little of the difficulties of getting at historic truth, even in the most thoroughly studied of human affairs; he is either deliberately taking me in, or he is a reckless writer, whose aim is to present a grandly got-up story, and to seem to have penetrated to the depths of every thing when he has been merely picking up materials for a rhetorical statement."

Seven years after the publication of his first two volumes Mr. Macaulay appears with two more, still bigger than their predecessors, and relating the events of just eight years. Now, if the author really wanted seven years to study for the writing the history of eight, and those eight comprised in that particular period which has been the special object of his admiration from his youth, what right had he to undertake a history of England when already in the decline of life? If this was not the cause, what was? Mr. Macaulay has vouchsafed the public no explanation of the phenomenon. We gather from a certain passage in the second of the two recently-published volumes, that he is at length altering his plans, and has given up the idea of fulfilling the promise of his outset. At the end of his seventeenth chapter, after speaking in his usual roundabout and allusive way to the Emancipation Act,



he adds, "It will be for some other historian to relate the vicissitudes of that great conflict, and the late triumph of reason and humanity." From this we gather that Mr. Macaulay already contemplates stopping short of the Emancipation and Reform period; though really he is so oracularly ambiguous, that it is often difficult to know what he means. He has such a taste for the review-style of announcing historical facts, that it is often difficult to tell precisely with what degree of literalness he intends us to accept his sentences. Take, for instance, the sentence which follows that which we have just quoted:

"Unhappily such a historian will have to relate that the triumph won by such exertions and by such sacrifices was immediately followed by disappointment; that it proved far less easy to eradicate evil passions than to repeal evil laws; and that long after every trace of national and religious animosity had been obliterated from the statute-book, national and religious animosities continued to rankle in the bosom of millions."

What a caricature of historical statement is this! What an imposition on our common sense to be told that "every trace of national and religious animosity has been long obliterated from the statute-book"! This is Macaulay all over. It is an extravagant exaggeration, and, speaking historically, it is devoid of truth. There are *many* such "traces of national and religious animosity" in the statute-book: most of these may be practically inoperative; but there they are, as a fact with the Ecclesiastical Titles' Bill, as the crowning contradiction to our historian's assertion.

We have said that Mr. Macaulay is given to be oracularly ambiguous. This is not one of the faults most commonly imputed to him; but we think few persons can critically examine his writings, and not come to the same conclusion. And we believe, moreover, that this very oracular ambiguity is one of the causes of his great popularity. People imagine that because his narratives are enormously long, and yet not wearisome, and, moreover, because he frequently brings out little points of minute historical or anecdotal information not generally known, and of a telling character, his history is lengthy on account of the minuteness of its details and the careful elaboration of all its parts. This, however, is not the case. Mr. Macaulay's style of painting is infected with the error which is the reverse of that of the "Pre-Raphaelites." The "Pre-Raphaelites," as fashion calls them, paint not only what the eye sees, when it fixes itself on a scene as a whole, but what it sees by a separate inspection of all that is actually before it, taken part by part, and requiring innumerable

changes in its action as an optical instrument. Mr. Macaulay, on the other hand, overlooks all linear details, and is not to be depended on for real minuteness or precise accuracy in any thing. His aim is to produce an effective scene by breadth of handling, a rich tone of colour, a masculine vigour of touch, and a brilliant prominence of lights in those portions of his performance which he wishes the spectator particularly to observe. His volumes abound in "views," both of persons and events, rather than in the individual facts which it is the special province of the historian to learn, to arrange, and to present. His manner of doing what he does is undoubtedly able in a very high degree; but still the result is the rhetoric of history, rather than history itself.

And this is just what the world of miscellaneous readers likes. It is a mistake to suppose that people are usually extremely anxious to know the correct facts on any subject that they care about; they want to think they know them, much more than really to know them. The distinction is a real and a most important one. To know a thing is satisfactory to our nature, acting innocently and in conformity with the laws which our Creator impressed upon it. To know that we know things, or to think that we know them, is a reflex action of the mind itself, which is totally different, and which tends to flatter our self-love. Accordingly, the world loves a sham instructor better than a real one. It delights to sit at the feet of one who will supply it with a clear and interesting view, apparently embodying an immense amount of information, but so presented that any ordinary capacity can think it comprehends all that is said, and garnished with little spicy novelties which fill the mind with a pleasing titillation, and send it back to its ordinary work with the conviction that now it is perfectly well-informed on the subject of discussion. In thus gratifying the intellectual vanity of his readers, Mr. Macaulay is a master-hand. Nine people out of ten get up from his volumes with the firm conviction that they know every thing that is worth knowing about the times on which he has been discoursing in such fluent and fascinating phrase.

Let us state, however, a little more in detail our reasons for withholding our confidence from Mr. Macaulay as a historian. This we shall best do by first briefly pointing out the great difficulties which lie in the historian's path, and which are not always so distinctly recognised as they ought to be by either writer or reader of history. It is often supposed that the great work a historian has to accomplish, is to get together all the materials that can be laid hold of, by hook or by crook, bearing on any past events, and to combine all these



into a complete and readable narrative, with wise remarks on the events thus portrayed. An immense store of reading of the writings of the period treated on, is held to be *the* one requisite, par excellence, for writing a history. Ransack every library; beg access to every old muniment-room; hunt up all the fugitive songs, epigrams, and squibs of the day; above all, rout out somebody or other's private diary or private correspondence; and, behold, you are three-parts of an authority already. Most readers are perfectly willing to put their faith in the narrative drawn up by any man who has actually heaped up all these stores, and read them, and collated them, and is at the same time a fairly honest person himself.

Now, unless we are strangely mistaken, we have here no single sign that the person thus furnished is to be trusted *as a historian*. His real difficulties have yet to begin. The question is, how much of all this mighty heap of contemporary literature—even granting that it is all contemporary—is to be depended on as practically trustworthy? For ourselves, we believe that a very large portion of the so-called materials for history are utterly worthless. The statements they make *may be* true, in the nature of things; but the historian has no right to repeat them unless he has good reason for believing that they *are* true. It is absurd to suppose that, because the “materials for history” are as old as the events recorded, therefore they are to be depended on. Is not the literature of one's own time one gigantic mass of contradictions and incorrectnesses as to matters of fact? See how hard it is to get at the exact truth about the men and things of the day; not because the people who write and talk are false, but because nearly every body is loose and incorrect in repeating what he hears, and because most persons are more impressed by the confidence with which a thing is stated, than by the evidence on which it rests. The future historian of the present day will have to depend upon what is now written, either for the public or for private eyes. What will be the value of his materials? Will not three-fourths of it be mere gossip, report, impressions, exaggerations, party-statements, jests, and even diametrically contradictory accounts of the same things proceeding from actual eye or ear-witnesses? If any body doubts the extraordinary inaccuracy of mankind in general as reporters of facts, let him tell any little history or anecdote to a few of his friends, and let him then hear them, one by one, repeat what he has said to other persons. He will find that in nearly every single instance the story is told differently from the way in which he told it, and has become practically inexact and untrue as a narrative. Why, then, should



we place implicit confidence in the rumours, the scandals, the professed "every-body-says," of a past age, merely because these things are printed on old and dirty paper, or are to be found only in a venerable college-library, or the archives of some ducal mansion situated in a magnificent park of oak-trees?

The first *bonâ fide* work of the historian, therefore, is to reject every thing that does not rest on sufficient proof;—not, we repeat, on some proof, but on sufficient proof. For history is, by its very profession, the record of what actually has taken place, not of what may have taken place. A history is quite a different thing from the dogmatic gossip of the dinner-table, or the infallibly correct information of a newspaper correspondent. When we talk over the news of the day, or write it down in a diary, or send it off to a friend (little thinking that some day we shall be resuscitated as a historical "authority"), we do not pretend to have investigated the matter, or to vouch for the correctness of *our* authorities. But the historian does claim to do all this. He comes, not as the advocate, but as the judge; summing up, rejecting all insufficient proofs, and saying, "Believe this and that as true."

Hence the absolute necessity of a peculiar faculty for sifting the claims of old writings in one who would write history. Hence the mischief of an exaggerating disposition, which will magnify single instances into universal laws, or add just those little bits of colour to the delineations of the original sketcher which will alter the whole complexion of the picture, and produce a practical effect the very reverse of what was first contemplated.

It will be objected to us, that if we are to write history on this system of incredulity, no slight portion of the best accredited chronicles ought to be put in the fire, and on many of the most interesting parts of man's history we must be content to know little or nothing. We entirely agree with this deduction. We do not believe one-half of what we read in history. We doubt the value of the original sources, and we doubt the capacity of the writers for accuracy in repetition, not to mention the warping influences of party and personal prejudice.

Almost as we write, we meet with a fresh and very apt illustration of the excessive caution necessary in trusting to apparently unexceptionable authorities. In a recently-published number of the *Correspondant*, a French Catholic periodical which has lately passed into the hands of an eminent body of French Catholic literati, we find an article "On Publicity in England." It is written by Count de Montalembert, and its object is thus described: "In speaking of the institu-

tions and traditions of England—of those of them which we may not only envy, but might adopt with benefit to our democratic society—if we inquire minutely what is the principal instrument of that social mechanism, so solid, and at the same time so complicated, what is the most efficacious guarantee for the enjoyment of so many rights, both ancient and modern, I incline to think that the answer is, publicity. The publicity which prevails in England is at once immense, complete, and sincere. It was not so always, but it is so now. Such publicity cannot of course exist without the freedom of the press; but liberty of the press does not always suffice to establish it. This we know by experience. We have had in France the license of the press, but we have never had true publicity.”

Here we have exactly one of those “materials for history” on which some future French Macaulay will rely. He will essay to paint the spirit of the middle of the nineteenth century as shown in the conduct of the press, and will naturally contrast its condition in France with its condition in England. And who so perfectly faultless an authority as M. de Montalembert on such a subject? If he is wrong as to the great facts of the matter, who can be trusted? He is a man of mature age, unusual abilities, half-English by parentage, well-read in English literature, a devout Catholic, and a man of unimpeachable honour. He is, moreover, formally enlightening his fellow-countrymen on a matter of fact, on which it is impossible to suppose that he can be greatly in error; and the statements he makes are by no means such as can be supposed palatable to the government under whom he writes.

Now mark the “facts” here embalmed for the future Macaulay: “You must not look for justice or moderation in the judgments of the English journalists. No, but you may be sure of this, that side by side with his leading-article you will always find a full and faithful narrative of the facts that he discusses—a correct reproduction of the speech or writing which he may attack; and thus the rights of truth are preserved.”

What will the Catholic readers of the *Times* say to this last sentence, when they remember the “correct reproduction” of Cardinal Wiseman’s lectures which that honourable newspaper makes the subject of its coarse attacks—the first lecture on the Concordat, for instance? M. de Montalembert’s statement is totally incorrect. Yet the coming historian will ask if it was possible that on *Catholic* subjects, at any rate, he could be greatly mistaken?

Further on, he continues: “In England the public looks



upon itself as a standing jury. It insists upon hearing the *pro* and *con* of every question. Any individual who may be attacked, or even alluded to, in a newspaper, is at once a party to the great cause always in course of hearing. He may use, and even abuse, the rights of the defence. Every newspaper is constrained, out of respect for public opinion, to assume the attitude of those judges whose Anglo-Saxon equity will not allow an accused party to be insulted or entrapped. Injustice often prevails after all; the evil principle is too often triumphant in England, as elsewhere; but the victory of evil, always contested, is never complete—never definitive. Every complaint finds an echo, every right a champion, every combatant a fair field of battle."

We are literally amazed at seeing such an assertion. Does M. de Montalembert ever look at an English Catholic newspaper; or, if so, does he ever read any thing more than the leading-articles? How, then, is it that he has forgotten the repeated instances which their columns supply of letters refused insertion by the Protestant journals on Catholic subjects, when they refute false statements made by their own writers? Nor is it only in Catholic matters that the English press is guilty of the crime of which M. de Montalembert so pointedly acquits it. Of course, if he reads only the *Times*, and believes its own professions of immaculate virtue, his error is accounted for; but let him look at the other daily and weekly papers, and he will find that the panegyric is totally undeserved, and that it is extremely rare for any journal to insert the corrections of injured correspondents, unless, for some reason or other, they find a special interest in so doing.

Here, then, as we have said, is perhaps as trustworthy an authority for unborn chroniclers as can be named. Yet he will grievously mislead them in a very important matter of fact. What, then, ought to be the caution of the Macaulays of to-day, in accepting the testimony of writers of ages now long past, on any thing except what they have personally witnessed; and even then, how often will they mislead, from sheer want of capacity for accurate observation?

In that peculiar genius for discrimination, without which no man ought to write such a history as Mr. Macaulay's, he himself is singularly deficient. He does not even aim at discrimination. He reads an endless collection of books, pamphlets, broad-sheets, and manuscripts. He has a capital memory, and he can put things together with admirable skill. But the purpose with which he devours his varied repast is transparent. He wants to write a telling, powerful, picturesque narrative. He wants to get together every thing that



can be brought in to help the impression of his story. His aim is not to tell what is true, and *only* what is true. When he lights upon some old scrap, or some forgotten volume, he does not consider whether it is to be depended on, but he looks to see what is in it. If it will help to fill up his picture, it is a treasure; and down go its statements, even though it is an absolutely anonymous production, side by side with the best-proved facts; provided always, let us add, that it does not clash with Mr. Macaulay's personal feelings on Whigs, parsons, Papists, James the Second, and the glorious Revolution.

This omnivorous appetite for the rubbish of the past is, besides, not a little fostered by a writer's desire to present what is called a picture of the times. The historians of the last century wrote about kings, ministers, and battles. This they considered was the history of man. Now-a-days the world is wiser, and wants to know what living men and women did in private as well as in public. They want to know how their forefathers ate, drank, dressed, amused themselves, travelled, talked, and generally passed their daily existence. And this is undoubtedly a vast improvement on the old notion of history; but it brings with it a special temptation, even to more cautious men than Mr. Macaulay. All is grist that goes to this modern mill. Pictures of society are drawn from sketches of individual instances, often by the most incompetent draughtsmen. One set of facts, which can easily be got at, is presented as indicating the entire character of human existence, to the total ignoring of those which, after all, had the chief influence in determining what *it was to be a living man in those days*. We need hardly add, that as Mr. Macaulay, at the outset, made it his prominent profession that he should instruct us in all these things, so he is pre-eminently faulty in gathering up materials of all sorts and kinds, and in deducing from them general conclusions far beyond what they would warrant, even supposing them to be trustworthy as simple witnesses of single matters of fact.

Of course the ordinary critic, and still less the ordinary reader, cannot be expected to point out every separate case in which a writer of Mr. Macaulay's extensive reading goes astray. Nevertheless, it is far from difficult to test his pretensions. When we find that, wherever we do investigate a person's statements, we detect instances of carelessness, prejudice, exaggeration, and perversion of original documents, then we are more than justified in treating his whole work as more or less a fraud upon our understandings, and an imposition upon our credulity. He becomes instantly a suspicious personage; and whatever he tells us we hesitate to believe, even though we

can perceive in it no signs of untruth or bigotry. The critics of sundry newspapers and periodicals have already been busy with Mr. Macaulay's mistakes and perversions, and we shall therefore not trouble our readers with a fresh exposure of those particulars with which the public is already familiar; preferring to note other instances which have happened to strike ourselves, and which, as far as we know, have not been dwelt upon in detail.

As a specimen of the sort of "authorities" on which we are requested to believe, for instance, the history of the war in Ireland between the Williamite and Jacobite parties, take one which Mr. Macaulay incessantly quotes, called *The Life of James*. What can be the real weight of this book, or else what is the weight to be attributed to Mr. Macaulay's selections from it, when we find him at one time calling one of its narratives "an absurd romance;" and saying of another of them that "it deserves to be noticed merely for its pre-eminent absurdity"? After narrating the battle of Aghrim, Mr. Macaulay gives his authorities; but admits that they "differ very widely from each other," and that "the difference cannot be ascribed solely or chiefly to partiality;" adding, "no two narratives differ more widely than that which will be found in the *Life of James*, and that which will be found in the *Memoirs of his son*." Is this history, we ask again? And are we to believe that from such unsatisfactory originals Mr. Macaulay is, of all writers in the world, *the* man to detect the truth and nothing but the truth? *Credat Judæus: haud ego*. No one could succeed better than he in making up a plausible story out of the heterogeneous mass of contradictions and newsmongering before him; but as for trusting him to disentangle the thin silken thread of facts which lies knotted and twisted up amid the confusion of hempen and cotton cordage which overlays and holds it in, we should as soon believe that Alexander untied the Gordian knot with his fingers.

As an illustration of Mr. Macaulay's arts, and while we are upon the conflicts in Ireland, we may as well notice a characteristic instance, which the story of the capitulation of Limerick supplies, of his ingenuity in maligning those whom he thinks fit to hate. When Limerick surrendered to the Williamites, it was agreed that the Jacobite troops who preferred it should have permission to leave the country and enter the service of the King of France. Mr. Macaulay thus tells us what went on on the occasion:

"The help of the Roman Catholic clergy was called in (by the Jacobite leaders). On the day on which those who had made up their minds to go to France were required to announce their deter-



mination, the priests were indefatigable in exhorting. At the head of every regiment a sermon was preached on the duty of adhering to the cause of the Church, and on the sin and danger of consorting with unbelievers. Whoever, it was said, should enter the service of the usurpers would do so at the peril of his soul. The heretics affirmed that, after the peroration, a plentiful allowance of brandy was served out to the audience; and that when the brandy had been swallowed, a bishop pronounced a benediction. Thus duly primed by physical and moral stimulants, the garrison, consisting of about 14,000 infantry, was drawn up in the vast meadow which lay on the Clare bank of the Shannon."

Considering that, a few pages further on, Mr. Macaulay gives vent to his pious and charitable feelings in the canting piece of lamentation which we have already quoted, this "narrative" of the "Papists'" proceedings may be pronounced as pretty well for a votary of universal benevolence. But let us look at it in detail. The only authority for this story about the preaching and the brandy is Story's "Impartial History;" except that, exactly at the particular point of the narration which will serve to mislead the reader without the utterance of a direct falsehood, Mr. Macaulay pretends to confirm Story's account,—which has no pretence to being any thing better than common report,—by the testimony of one who, *he tells us*, was present, but whom he elsewhere contemptuously describes as a hedge-schoolmaster turned captain. This man wrote a sort of diary, in the vilest Latin, and in an almost undecipherable hand; and Mr. Macaulay has had the ms. lent to him. He confirms a small portion only of what Mr. Macaulay gives as history, in the following words: "Hic apud sacrum omnes advertizantur a capellanis ire potius in Galliam." Now, in the first place, who or what this person was we know not; he might have been no more to be trusted to make a general statement than any one of the ordinary run of common soldiers in any army. But granting that *he* was correct, we pray the reader to observe what his simple statement, that the chaplains advised the troops to go to France, has become in the hands of our modern investigator of historical truth. See, also, how dexterously the story about the brandy is introduced. First, we have the chaplains' advice "to prefer going to France," expanded into "on the duty of adhering," &c. &c., "peril of the soul," and so forth. Then comes stealthily in, "the heretics affirmed;"—a lie told in the guise of a candid admission that it was only "the heretics' affirmation." Lastly, the whole story takes the complete Macaulayan shape, and comes out a full-blown slander. "Thus, duly primed with physical and moral stimulants, the garrison" did so and so.



Good, simple readers of the *Rambler*, when you want to blast your innocent neighbour's reputation, take a lesson from the Right Honourable Thomas Babington Macaulay.

Our next illustration of Mr. Macaulay's veracity involves a charge of a still darker dye. In the year 1692, a half-witted Frenchman, named Grandval, was seized in the Netherlands, and hanged, drawn, and quartered, on an accusation of having intended to assassinate William the Third. This crime, Mr. Macaulay says, had the expressed approval of the exiled James, and Louis the Fourteenth was "an accessory after the fact." This outrageous accusation against the two monarchs is too monstrous for even such sound Protestants as the conductors of the *Times* newspaper, which has briefly expressed its disbelief in Mr. Macaulay's charge. We shall presently quote the accusation itself, as it stands, and show in detail what it is worth; but in order thoroughly to understand the craft which our author employs in order to throw an air of plausibility over his most daring untruths, we must first extract his story of the death of Louvois, the renowned minister of Louis the Fourteenth. The reader will bear in mind, that in his nineteenth chapter, Mr. Macaulay is about to charge the French king with approving one of the most atrocious crimes that can awake the horror and indignation of one man against another. In order to make his charges go down, it is necessary to blacken the character of the accused, and to suppress every thing that may make him appear incapable of the extraordinary wickedness which is to be imputed to him. We need hardly tell our own readers that we are no admirers of the French monarch,—we might almost say in any single point of view. Still, we feel the natural indignation of every honest man at seeing his history doctored and "cooked" as we here see it by the most popular of modern English historians.

In his eighteenth chapter, then, Mr. Macaulay thus describes the death of Louvois:

"In spite of his abilities and of his services, he had become odious to Lewis, and to her who governed Lewis. On the last occasion on which the king and the minister transacted business together, the ill-humour on both sides broke violently forth. The servant, in his vexation, dashed his portfolio on the ground. The master, forgetting, what he seldom forgot, that a king should be a gentleman, lifted his cane. Fortunately his wife was present. She, with her usual prudence, caught his arm. She then got Louvois out of the room, and exhorted him to come back the next day as if nothing had happened. The next day he came, but with death in his face. The king, though full of resentment, was touched with

pity, and advised Louvois to go home and take care of himself. That evening the great minister died.

Louvois had constantly opposed all plans for the invasion of England. His death was therefore regarded at St. Germain's as a fortunate event. It was, however, necessary to look sad, and to send a gentleman to Versailles with some words of condolence. The messenger found the gorgeous circle of courtiers assembled round their master on the terrace above the orangery. 'Sir,' said Lewis, in a tone so easy and cheerful that it filled all the bystanders with amazement, 'present my compliments and thanks to the King and Queen of England, and tell them that neither my affairs nor theirs will go on the worse for what has happened.' These words were doubtless meant to intimate that the influence of Louvois had not been exerted in favour of the House of Stuart."

Thus far Mr. Macaulay; and he adds a note to say that Saint Simon, to whom he refers for the story, "was on the terrace, and, young as he was, observed this singular scene with an eye which nothing escaped." Turn we, then, to Saint Simon's Memoirs, and we shall receive a new and pregnant lesson in the art of blackening men's characters. Mr. Macaulay, it will have been observed, here favours the English reader with two anecdotes of Louis; and both of these are known to the world on the authority of Saint Simon. As Mr. Macaulay tells us, he witnessed the scene last related; and he may be taken for as fair a witness as can be expected in a boy of fifteen, for he was only of that age. At any rate, he was told the history of Louvois' conduct after he left the king on the day of the quarrel by the friends who were with Louvois immediately after it.

Now it so happens that the story of the quarrel, as told by Saint Simon, differs in every important particular from that which Mr. Macaulay here repeats; and it is far more favourable to Louis, though Saint Simon was any thing but a partial friend to the king. It further shows him in a light which makes it highly improbable that he would have tolerated the horrible crime which Mr. Macaulay imputes to him. Accordingly, while telling the second story as Saint Simon tells it, he throws him overboard for the first, and repeats *Burnet's* version, which was nothing more than the gossip of the Williamite courtiers, and has not the shadow of a pretension to be put against Saint Simon's. Saint Simon's narrative was this: that Louvois was extremely eager to exercise some horrible cruelties on the city of Trêves; he wished, in fact, to burn it to the ground, as a supplement to the "terrible executions" which he had already perpetrated in the Palatinate. This monstrous proposal was vehemently opposed by Madame de



Maintenon, as an atrocious cruelty; and Louis, who, Saint Simon says, was then more scrupulous than in after-years, would not hear of the minister's proposal. One day Louvois went to the king, and again urged on him the expediency of burning the suspected city; but in vain. He then, thinking it was nothing but scruples that influenced him, had the extraordinary audacity to tell Louis that he had already despatched a courier to Trêves to give orders for setting fire to the place. On this the king was transported with indignation; and seized—not his cane, but the tongs in the fireplace, and rushed towards Louvois. Madame de Maintenon threw herself before him, and snatched the tongs from his hands, crying, "What are you going to do, sir?" Louvois rushed to the door; and the king called after him to send off another courier instantly, and told him that he should answer for it with his own head if a single house at Trêves was burnt.

Here we have the true story. *Of course*, Mr. Macaulay suppressed it; for it makes it simply incredible, that within a very few weeks, or almost days, Louis could have been guilty of the crime, of his participation in which Mr. Macaulay says "no human being could doubt."

But so determined is this writer in his vilifying, that he distorts that part of the narrative which he does take from Saint Simon, so far as it interferes with his picture of Louis's heartlessness; and even where there is nothing to gain by colouring the original, he must needs be busy with his paint-pot. The picturesque sentence about the death in the face of the minister is all invention. Saint Simon says nothing about Louvois' death being caused by the royal displeasure. He seems to have had some complaint upon him, for he went to drink the waters at Trianon on the morning of his death. In the course of the day he went to the king in the apartments of Madame de Maintenon (who was now the king's wife), and while there he felt himself rather unwell (*il s'était trouvé un peu mal*). The king then insisted on his going home, which he did on foot; at home his complaint suddenly increased, and he died while taking remedial measures.

The scene on the terrace is doctored with malice prepense. Mr. Macaulay's aim is to show up Louis for being as gay and merry as if nothing in the world had recently happened of a serious kind. Let the inexperienced note the skill with which he gently perverts his authority's words. Saint Simon says particularly, that he observed that Louis did not follow his universal custom (*qu'il faisait toujours*) of inspecting the fountains, and walking about in different parts of the gardens;



but that he did nothing but walk up and down the terrace of the orangery, *from which he could see the apartments in which Louvois had just died*; and that every time these came within view, as he walked in their direction, *he kept his eyes incessantly fixed upon them*.

This makes it evident that the *air et ton plus que dégagés*, which Mr. Macaulay coolly renders "a tone so easy and cheerful," &c., was simply put on for the occasion, in order to make James's messenger think that he was not troubled at what had happened. Moreover, Saint Simon does not say that it was the king's manner "which filled all the bystanders with amazement." He speaks of their surprise after the king's speech to the English courtier, but gives no hint that it was caused by his heartless gaiety. So low can Mr. Macaulay descend in the details of misrepresentation, and so perfect a master is he in the art of damaging the characters of those he thinks fit to malign.

Into the validity of the charge which he subsequently brings against Louis and James we have not now space to enter, and must reserve it, with some other specimens of this model history, for our next number. In the meantime, we may note in passing one or two briefer illustrations of its trustworthiness in details. One of Mr. Macaulay's most common artifices consists in making a specific statement of something that was said or done by some individual; he then appends to this some remark or general assertion, which in reality applies only to the special case before him; but he artfully puts it in such a way as to leave an impression that the statement is universally true, or that it has a far different meaning from that which his authorities warrant. Here is an instance. At p. 285, vol. iv., when telling the story which we shall examine in our next, he has these sentences in the text: "A flighty and half-witted man is the very instrument generally preferred by cunning politicians when very hazardous work is to be done. No shrewd calculator would, for any bribe, however enormous, have exposed himself to the fate of Catel, of Ravallac, or of Gerarts." To this last phrase is added a foot-note: "Langhorne, the chief lay agent of the Jesuits in England, always, as he owned to Tillotson, selected tools on this principle." For this statement we are referred to Burnet. Now, it is not going too far to allege that every reader of Mr. Macaulay must take this note to mean that Langhorne told Tillotson that he selected his tools generally on the principle here described. Langhorne is adroitly put forward as a sort of representative of the Jesuits and their system,—as a man

whose great office was to "employ tools," and who chose them on this theory. In fact, Langhorne and the Jesuits are formally held up to scorn and reprobation.

Turn we now to Burnet, who is Mr. Macaulay's only authority for his accusation. In the first place, this absurd story, as reported by Burnet, has nothing whatever to do with William, or James, or the Jesuits, or the year 1682. It only pretends to relate what Tillotson said that Langhorne told him, when he saw him sending off "a half-witted man to manage elections in Kent," *in the time of Oliver Cromwell, before the Restoration!* Burnet says nothing about the Jesuits, or about Langhorne's being their chief lay-agent, calling him a "Popish counsellor-at-law;" and Langhorne said nothing about "employing tools" generally in this way, but only in "dangerous services." As for the story itself, it was just the sort of thing for a credulous, showy, and shallow man like Tillotson to repeat and to believe. Tillotson, on Burnet's own statement, believed that the fire of London was the work of "the Papists,"—an extravagant idea, in which Burnet himself formally denies his own belief. What Langhorne really said to Tillotson, we cannot, of course, tell; but we must be excused for doubting that he was such an excessive simpleton as to tell Tillotson any thing that really revealed what he did. Such is Burnet's real story; re-cooked and garnished with the Jesuits, Mr. Macaulay makes it do service when he assails King James, as furnishing a probability that the would-be assassin of William was just the sort of man whom Papists, especially Jesuits, would have employed for the diabolical deed. If Mr. Macaulay had a grain of honesty about him, he would have asked himself whether it was probable that the Jesuits could be such superhuman monsters of craft as he accounts them, and *at the same time* such astonishing fools as to employ men who would prate about their ways to silly Protestant zealots like Tillotson.

The authorities on which the whole personal character of Lord Keeper Somers depends may be cited, in passing, both as an instance of the difficulties of history, and as an illustration of Mr. Macaulay's way of dealing with them.

"The eulogies on Somers," he says, "and the invectives against him, are innumerable. Perhaps the best way to come to a just judgment would be to collect all that has been said about him by Swift and Addison. They were the two keenest observers of their time, and they both knew him well; but it ought to be remarked, that till Swift turned Tory, he always extolled Somers, not only as the most accomplished, but as the most virtuous of men. After Swift ratted, he described



Somers as a man who 'possessed all excellent qualifications except virtue.' "

Mr. Macaulay, accordingly, in order "to come to a just judgment," adopts all that Addison\* says, and rejects all that Swift says. His "character" of Somers is simply an elaborate eulogy, with the following mild description of his sensualism brought in at the end: "There is reason to believe that there was a small nucleus of truth round which this great mass of fiction gathered; and that the wisdom and self-command which Somers never wanted in the senate, on the judgment-seat, at the council-board, or in the society of wits, scholars, and philosophers, were not always proof against female attractions."

On this we can only ask, What if Marlborough's private life had been like that of Somers? What an outburst of offended purity would have escaped our moralist! Instead of this, Mr. Macaulay throws overboard the wide-spread stories and lampoons of the day, which would have been enough to convict a *Marlborough* of outrageous libertinism; and we have this shameless twaddle about not being "always proof against female attractions."†

We have had so much of our author's ingenuity in darkening, that we must note another specimen of his exaggerations in the rose-colouring way. It is one which would probably escape most readers' notice, and it might be called trifling; but it serves, as one of a numerous class, to show exactly the *kind* of untrustworthiness of which Mr. Macaulay is guilty, even when he is neither abusing the Duke of Marlborough, the Jesuits, or the Anglican clergy. In the middle of this same eulogy on Lord Keeper Somers, we find the simple fact, that this nobleman gave Vertue the engraver a commission to engrave Tillotson's portrait magnified into,—"Vertue, a strict Roman Catholic, was raised by the discriminating and liberal

\* Addison's formal opinion of Somers is expressed in a flaming panegyric in the *Freeholder*, to which Mr. Macaulay does not refer, possibly because its vague generalities would awake a suspicion of its sincerity.

† We may notice, that in referring to the authority for Somers' character, which he really adopts, viz. Addison, he colours Somers' conduct towards Addison in his usual fashion. "By Somers, Addison was drawn forth from a cell in a college." This is his *way of putting* the fact, that Addison wrote a poem in praise of King William, with introductory verses addressed to Somers, to whom the poem was presented, and who, on receiving the poem (according to Tickell), desired his acquaintance. Addison was already practising as a courtier, and had got a hearty aristocratic "patron" in Montague, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. When estimating Addison himself as an authority, we cannot help quoting, as peculiarly applicable, a sentence in Johnson's *Life*: "In this poem (*A Character of the English Poets*) is a very confident and discriminative character of Spenser, whose work he had then never read. So little, sometimes," continues Johnson, with an eye to unborn Macaulays, "is criticism the effect of judgment."



patronage of Somers from poverty and obscurity to the first rank among the engravers of the age." This veritable Macaulayism is pure fudge. When Somers gave him the commission referred to, Vertue was already much employed as an engraver through the patronage of Sir Godfrey Kneller, and his merits were so great, that he was rising inevitably to fame; but Somers was a Williamite Whig, and so he could not engage Vertue to engrave a print without taking rank with Mæcenas and Leo the Tenth,—a rank to which, in Vertue's regard, he had not the smallest title; for among all the eminent "patrons" who afterwards aided Vertue in his great historical-portrait engravings the name of Somers is not found. Mr. Macaulay puffs Somers; we shall end our present remarks by commending to his notice what Walpole says of Vertue's character and habits. "Vertue," he tells us, "was incommode: *he loved truth.*" And, again: "He was simple, modest, and scrupulous. He never uttered his opinion hastily, nor hastily assented to that of others." And once more: "One satisfaction the reader will have in the integrity of Mr. Vertue: it exceeded his industry, which is saying much. No man living, so bigoted to a vocation, was ever so incapable of falsehood. He did not deal in hypothesis, scarce in conjecture."

If we had to sum up the characteristics of our "historian," we think we should content ourselves with the above record of Vertue's merits, and inserting a negative before every one of them, append them to the portrait of Thomas Babington Macaulay.

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## Short Notices.

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### THEOLOGY, PHILOSOPHY, &c.

*Sunday Evenings at Home. Lectures on Religious Truths; from Advent to Easter.* By the Rev. W. J. Alban Sheehy, M.A.A. First Series. (Dublin, Duffy.) We have often wanted to see a volume like this of Mr. Sheehy's, containing the sort of doctrinal, spiritual, and scriptural *information* which we are too apt to fancy comes to young and uneducated Catholics by a sort of inspiration. Mr. Sheehy has accomplished this first section of his task in a way that we think will be very acceptable to the class of readers for whom he writes. We should add, that his volume is excellently suited for lending-libraries. We shall hope before long to see a second instalment of the whole work.

*Manual of the Third Order of St. Francis.* (Burns and Lambert.) A useful and complete manual for the Franciscan Tertiaries, and in-

teresting besides to all who wish to see the working of Catholicism in those minor details which are less palpable to general observation. The advertisement implies that it is translated from continental writers; which we should have inferred from the peculiar manner in which certain amusements are spoken of at pp. 53, 54—a manner which is too vague for practical guidance in this country, and yet employs phrases tending to create morbid scrupulosity.

*The Spiritual Doctrine of F. Louis Lallemant, S.J.* Edited by F. W. Faber, D.D. (Burns and Lambert.) This is a work of great value, and belongs to a class of which we have few translated specimens in our language, and still fewer originals. Simple as are its form and diction, they are the vehicle for the deepest spirituality. Like all works eminent in this respect, its basis is a profound theology; without which foundation, it is almost a truism to say, books professing to treat of the spiritual life are apt to run into the turgid, sentimental, or commonplace, even where not guilty of exaggeration, deficiency, or error. St. Philip Neri's advice is well known: "Read the books whose authors' names begin with S." Now, though Father Lallemant is not a canonised saint, a glance at the short Life which is prefixed to the volume will show that he was a very saintly man; and his work, while composed with scientific precision, and therefore a sort of compendious treatise on the principles and order of the spiritual life, is remarkable for sweetness and unction. Indeed, the volume may profitably be used, as we have no doubt it will be used by many, as a book of meditation: *e.g.* we know of no work in English which contains so much in a concise and solid form on the subject of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the mysteries of the Incarnation, the properties of the Sacred Humanity, the different states of life of the God-Man, and the wonders of the Holy Eucharist. The translation is carefully and correctly done, and renders the original into readable and idiomatic English.

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#### MISCELLANEOUS LITERATURE.

*The Catholic Church before and after Conversion.* A Lecture; by F. Oakeley. (London, Burns and Lambert.) We hardly know whether to place our notice of this clever and instructive lecture under the heading of "Theology" or "Miscellaneous Literature." The subject indicates the former; the treatment the latter. At any rate, it is one of the best things of Mr. Oakeley's that we have read; and is as amusing as it is full of thought.

*A Special Report of the Trial of the Rev. Vladimir Petcherine.* Edited by James Doyle, Esq. (Dublin, Duffy.) Notwithstanding the high reputation of Mr. O'Hagan, to whom was intrusted the chief conduct of the defence of F. Petcherine, we confess that when we saw his speech puffed in the newspapers as "great speech," "splendid speech," &c., we expected a grand outburst of clap-trap and rubbish. Our expectations were most agreeably disappointed. It is an unusually excellent specimen of legal advocacy and rhetorical power, and bears all that impress of sincerity and genuineness which have contributed so largely to Mr. O'Hagan's reputation. It well deserved to be reprinted, as the chief attraction in Mr. Doyle's report of the trial.



*A Lady's Second Journey round the World, from London to the Cape of Good Hope, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Celebes, Ceram, &c.* By Ida Pfeiffer. 2 vols. (London, Longmans.) Madame Pfeiffer is a wonderful woman. With no object but the collection of a few butterflies and fishes, the enjoyment of a change of scenery, and the collection of some rather superficial observations on the manners and customs of people of whose language she does not understand a word, she will make solitary journeys among cannibal Battakers, head-hunting Dyacks, and Alforas, through tropical forests and marshes, and over the most heart-breaking lung-bursting mountains. It is the pluck and strength of the woman, rather than her powers of observation and description, that render her books so popular. Her example shows that, in journeys for scientific purposes among savage tribes, a woman may travel with much more security than a man: and we beg to hint to some of our blooming sisters of the United States, that by following Madame Ida Pfeiffer they may establish their claims to equality of strength much better than by the adoption of short petticoats, long trousers, and transcendental theories on the rights of woman.

*The Wanderer in Arabia, or Western Footsteps in Eastern Tracks.* By G. T. Lowth. 2 vols. (London, Hurst and Blackett.) This wanderer goes over the usual road—the Nile, the desert, and Jerusalem; the only novelty is, that his wife accompanies him, and that he dwells on the small deeds and sayings of the “Sitt” (as the Arabs taught him to call her) in a very gallant and uxorious manner. There is, we are sorry to say, nothing new in the Englishman's religious observations. At the Monastery of St. Catherine, on Mount Sina, he observes that the church was all lamps and pictures and decoration, while the mosque consisted of “bare white walls and a matted floor—nothing there but—Allah”! Allah being a kind of gloomy Calvinistic spirit, delighting in reprobation and whitewash, and carefully absenting himself from all places where there are “lamps, pictures, and decorations.” At Jerusalem our pilgrim believes every thing in general and nothing in particular. All traditions that are precise are doubtful; there must be indefiniteness, smoke, mist, gloom, &c., before the British imagination can be kindled; truth must be clothed in the garments of falsehood before the Englishman will acknowledge it to be true. The subjects of the illustrations are chosen for their easiness, without any consideration for their interest. They are entirely worthless.

*Rachel Gray, a Tale, founded on fact.* By Julia Kavanagh. (London, Hurst and Blackett.) A story of humble life, without any love-making, but turning simply on paternal and filial affection and piety. It is simply and touchingly told, and is in every way commendable. It advocates and insinuates true religious sentiments without a shadow of controversy, and without admitting any thing that can offend the most sensitive of those who differ from the authoress.

*A new History of England, Civil, Political, and Ecclesiastical.* By G. S. Poulton. (London, W. Freeman.) This is really a new history; history so transfigured and falsified, that not a single actor would recognise his own act. It is a bulky octavo of near 800 pages, intended to hit Popery through the ribs of English history, and to be a regular *exposé* of how “the Church of Rome, with its increasing wealth—its absurd and childish ceremonies—its numerous orders of covetous priests—its mocking fasts, worldly festivals, and profane holidays—its ecclesiastical wars and theological differences—its corrupt doctrines, impious decrees,



trumpery relics, and incredible fables—its avaricious and depraved members—with its black deeds, cunning artifices, and daring atrocities,—very soon became not only unlike, but in every way opposed to, the Church of Christ.” Mr. Poulton has succeeded in murdering the history; but his malice is greater than his wit, and the blow certainly has stopped there, and has not passed on to Popery. The book is a favourable specimen of the intensity and profligacy of English bigotry.

In a late review of Lord Brougham’s *Analytical View of Sir Isaac Newton’s Principia*, the *Athenæum*, after asking “whether the books of Copernicus and Galileo have been removed from the Index? and if so, when?” makes the following remarks on the case, which utterly relinquish the old Protestant ground, on which so many unsubstantial arguments against the infallibility of the Church have been erected:

“That the *sentence* upon Galileo has never been *reversed*, we have no doubt; nor that the declaration of falsehood and heresy in the earth’s motion has been allowed to stand. And for these reasons: Galileo, whatever his philosophical merits might be, *was* acting heretically, according to the maxims of the Roman Church, in persisting publicly to interpret the Scriptures in a Copernican sense, or in any sense; and the declaration of the Inquisition needed no reversal, for it never was, and never could be, considered, upon the maxims of the same Church, as binding on the conscience of any one, except the person on his trial, after his abjuration. Fromond and Riccioli, the two strongest anti-Copernican Roman Catholic writers of the seventeenth century, both distinctly declare that the Inquisition has no authority in a matter of faith; and both distinctly pronounce that it is necessary the Pope himself should decide the point. That no Pope ever did interfere, that the Church permitted the apparent settlement of the question, and consented by inaction to the presumptuous declaration of its local judicature, is the real scandal; and it will be a scandal to the end of time.”

In the preceding paragraph the reviewer owns that the Roman Index was only of local authority, not binding, for instance, in Spain, nor universally on all spiritual subjects of the Pope.

This, we conceive, gives up the whole Protestant ground of controversy. Hitherto they have cast in our teeth the pretended fact that our would-be infallible Pope has interfered with science, has condemned as untrue a doctrine since demonstrated to be true, and has been egregiously deceived, either in making a wrong definition of a doctrine which he had a right to define, or in mistaking the limits of his authority, and pretending to define a matter which he had no right to speak about. Now the quarrel takes a different turn—now “the real scandal is, that no Pope ever did interfere;” that the prohibition was only local and temporary, based not on the absolute truth of the doctrine, but on the effect it was likely to have on men’s minds; imposed not by the Pope, or other infallible organ of the infallible Church, but by the “local judicature;” and never formally reversed, because, like all temporary expedients, it had died out, and become practically null and void, and therefore needed no solemn extinguishing.

When Dr. Cumming, on one side, maintains that the scandal is that the Pope did interfere, and the *Athenæum*, on the other, that he did not interfere, our best way is to withdraw from the arena, and to leave the combatants to inflict what punishment they choose on each other’s eyes and noses.